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To  
WILTSHIRE

which, in its educational system, still clings to  
the Whig tradition; and especially to

DOROTHY SCOTT BAKER

Deputy Director of Education  
with whom I worked so closely during the  
anxious years of war and whom I regard  
not only as a colleague but also as a friend  
I dedicate this book



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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F.C.H.



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## INTRODUCTION

**D**r. Joad begins his book, *About Education*, with an attack on the dullness of most writers on educational themes. I think he fails to take into account that a good many books on education are deliberately 'technical' in character. Except to those engaged in the particular sphere with which the book deals, most technical books are dull. Yet they are often the most valuable ones.

One has become just a little weary of those books, not few in number, full of high ideals and fine sentiments, which describe a brave new educational world, in which all the defects of the present system have disappeared, and omit the one thing needful, concrete information as to how this brave new world is to be brought into being.

I have dreamed my own dreams, some of them, I now realize, perhaps rather silly Utopian dreams. As I have grown older, and I hope a little wiser, I have ceased to be much interested in dreams which I could not attempt, with some anticipation of success, to translate into the stuff of common day.

So I shall not, in this book, trouble my readers with too much dreaming. While it may not be lacking in idealism, it is concerned, for the most part, with efforts to make dreams come true, to bring them, through sweat and toil, through labour of mind and body, to reality.

It is made up of a number of studies, most published for the first time, some which, in the *Times Educational Supplement* and in the *Journal of Education*, have appeared before. I offer my grateful thanks to the Editors for permission to reprint them here.



## INTRODUCTION

Though each of the studies is complete in itself and may be read alone, the book has an underlying unity, which I have tried to indicate in its title, *Vision and Craftsmanship*. The significance of this title will be clear from what has been written above. Divided into four sections, it deals with various aspects of education, planning and administration, school life and curriculum, selection and testing, and religion and philosophy. The method adopted has necessitated some repetition; some ideas and descriptions appear more than once. For this I make no apology. Had I tried to avoid these repetitions, I should not only have confused my readers but also have made some of the studies, at least, of less value.

Finally, I have made no attempt to avoid technicalities; one cannot write sensibly about education without being at times technical. I have, however, tried to describe these technicalities in words which will be intelligible to those who are interested in education but are not professional educationalists. I have not tried to be 'popular'; I have tried very hard not to be dull.

I shall send a copy of the book to Dr. Joad and he shall tell me whether I have succeeded.

F. C. HAPPOLD

Salisbury, June 1947

**PLANNING  
AND ADMINISTRATION**



## I

### THE WHIG TRADITION IN CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH EDUCATION

**I**n that fascinating interpretation of the English genius, *The Englishman and His History*, Professor Herbert Butterfield contrasts the gradual and realistic method of initiating political and social change, characteristic of English development, with that revolutionary and Utopian method typified in the French Revolution and common on the continent of Europe. He describes how the shock of the Civil War of the seventeenth century resulted in a determination among the leaders of English thought and action in the following years that so violent a solution should never be tried again. Out of this ingrained resolution was born the 'Whig tradition', which has inspired our history ever since.

The characteristics of this Whig tradition, which might just as aptly be called the English tradition, have been a distrust and avoidance of violent and Utopian solutions, an instinct for compromise and a capacity for hastening slowly, a refusal to uproot what has been organic in our development, a desire to link the present with the past and to reform rather than destroy, coupled with a healthy scepticism of the degree to which the ills of the world can be rapidly cured by political action. There has thus been, in our social and political evolution, 'an alliance with history', 'a form of co-operation with Providence', to use Professor Butterfield's own vivid phrases, which has made the history of England a happier and more harmonious one than that of most other lands.

In these days, when revolutionary solutions find increased favour among so many, one cannot help speculating as to

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whether that particular tradition, which has so effectively dominated our history, is strong enough still to direct it. Shall we be able, in an age of violence and rapid change, to hold fast to the fundamental characteristic of our genius? Are the new classes which are emerging to power sufficiently steeped in that tradition instinctively to cling to it?

To a schoolmaster-historian it is particularly interesting to examine the extent to which this Whig tradition has operated in the field of English education. It is of even greater practical interest to consider the extent to which recent educational developments represent a continuance of or departure from it.

English education has, up to the present, evolved along lines which are essentially in accordance with the Whig tradition. It is the result of organic growth, of compromise and adaptation to immediate circumstance, rather than of abstract thought and planning. To many the result appears chaotic and irrational. Yet much of its virtue is due to the particular nature of its apparently haphazard growth. The development of the public school system, perhaps its most notable achievement, for instance, represents a most successful alliance with history. Essentially unplanned, moulded by the idealism of a few brilliant individuals, it not only met the needs of the emerging middle class, but also proved itself an effective instrument for training the type of men Britain required at a particular stage in her history.

It would be unreasonable to suppose that, in an age of planning and of increasingly centralized control and direction of every aspect of life, English education could continue along this course of haphazard, piecemeal development. Even had it not been an amusing habit of the British people to keep up their spirits during years of war by passing an Education Act, some sort of systematization would probably have taken place sooner or later. The real point of interest is whether this systematization, both in its conception, as envisaged in the Education Act of 1944, and in the way the Act is put into operation, is inspired by the spirit of the Whig tradition.

A swing to the Left and the emergence of new social classes to greater power is clearly discernible in recent history. Though it

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was steered through Parliament by a Conservative minister, the Act, in its general structure, expresses this current movement. It makes the pattern of English education more logical by labelling all education after eleven plus secondary and, at any rate on paper, introduces a measure of equality which did not exist before; it initiates a system of free state education at all levels up to the age of entry to a university; it provides for compulsory education for all, of one sort or another, up to eighteen; it authorizes the Minister of Education, a new title, expressing his enlarged functions, to lay down uniform minimum standards of school building and accommodation; it gives much wider power both to local education authorities and to the Minister himself.

Yet it is difficult to escape the conclusion that just as much has been conceded by the present dominant class as political necessity and the spirit of the age demanded, and little more. There is no real attempt to create a uniform, consistent system of state education; a compromise, designed to placate as many interests as possible, is accepted. Much is conceded to schools which originally came into existence as the result of voluntary effort. Above all, the most powerful and influential group of schools, the independent public schools, to which the majority of the dominant class have been accustomed to send their sons, remain outside the main state system. In short, the Education Act of 1944 is a typical piece of Whig legislation; it goes just as far as, and no further than, the existing situation demands. There is a refusal to be logical or to construct according to a consistent pattern; for to do so would be to run the risk of destroying what has proved good and workable in the past.

In practice the Act may be put into operation in more than one way, according to which of two schools of educational thought becomes dominant. There are two schools of educational thought in conflict at the present time. One may be called the 'revolutionary', the other the 'gradualist'. The first would use the Act, so far as it permits, to initiate as uniform and centralized a system of education as possible, through schools which all would attend, eliminating all distinctions and ironing out all differences. The second, while striving for a greater

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measure of equality of educational opportunity and parity of amenities, would try to preserve much of the variety which has characterized English education in the past and leave a good deal to the play of circumstance. In general, the first school of thought is 'egalitarian', the second 'aristocratic' in its outlook. These divisions must, however, be regarded as very rough ones with a good deal of overlapping; since we are considering the English scene, we must allow for inconsistency, even among those who regard themselves as most consistent.

The extreme revolutionary, of the Continental type, is unlikely to become influential unless social stresses should become very severe; the Englishman is loath to break with his history except under very great strain. The more moderate 'revolutionary' of the 'egalitarian' school of idealism is likely to prove a stronger force, for the demand for equality always has a wide appeal at a time of social struggle, such as the present, when new classes are rising to greater power and influence; equality has always proved a convenient slogan for those who are striving to improve their social or economic status.

This egalitarian idealism finds its more extreme educational expression in the conception of the large multilateral, all-type school,<sup>1</sup> into which all children would be drafted, irrespective of varieties of talent and social class. It appeals not only to those who would stress the ideal of equality, but also to those who, perhaps unconsciously, assume that the process of education can be carried out by the methods of the mass production

<sup>1</sup> There is some confusion in the terms used to describe different types of school. Since the writing of this essay the Ministry of Education has attempted to define these terms more exactly.

In that range of education labelled secondary there are three elements, modern, technical, and grammar. A *multilateral* school is defined as one which caters for all these three elements, organized in clearly defined sides or departments. A *comprehensive* school also contains all three elements but not organized in separate departments. A *bilateral* school contains two of the three elements, separately organized.

The term, *multilateral, all type* school, which I have used, covers both the *multilateral* and the *comprehensive* school, as defined by the Ministry. Under certain circumstances I believe there is much to be said for the *bilateral* school as, for instance, in the fusion of technical and modern elements in one school.

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factory. It has, moreover, an attraction for the power complex of the educational bureaucrat, whether he be a member of an Education Committee or an education official.

While there is a case for cautious experiment in the multi-lateral, all-type school—for instance, it may be found useful as a form of organization in sparsely populated rural areas where selective schools may be too small for efficient and economical running—one is forced to regard it with a good deal of mis-giving. It is out of tune with the English tradition, with its basic conception of the school as a community, educating as much, if not more, through the life lived in it as through direct instruction, and consequently limited in its possible size. Nor is there sufficient evidence that it will prove as effective an instrument for ensuring the emergence of talent, an all-important consideration at this critical stage of our history, as the smaller selective grammar schools to which we are accustomed. Though it would be unfair to attribute the shallowness of popular American culture solely to its educational system, there is little in the experience of the United States of America in schools of this type to recommend them. Further, one cannot escape a feeling that those who most vigorously advocate the setting up of multi-lateral, all-type schools are, whether they realize it or not, attempting to use the educational system as an instrument for the implementing of their own particular social and political plans. While it is true that education cannot expect to exist in isolation and that the character of schools is inevitably affected by current social and political ideas, the deliberate use of the educational system for the propaganda of the particular ideology of those in power, whether in Parliament or on the Councils of local authorities, is alien to the English tradition. The devil can quote scripture for his purpose and the 'democratic' plans of some egalitarian educationalists smack strongly of a subtle form of neo-totalitarianism.

While a few local authorities appear to favour the multi-lateral all-type school, its general adoption, even if material conditions allowed, appears unlikely. It is probable that a system of selective schools, of varying types for different grades of



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ability, will remain the most common pattern, at least for some time to come. An improvement in amenities, such as buildings, playing fields and staff ratios, in both the new secondary and the primary schools may eventually be expected; the greater prestige these schools demand will, however, to a great extent, depend on themselves, and on how they develop. There is a good deal of talk in some quarters about the desirability of parity among schools. Approximate parity of conditions may be attained if the state decides to spend sufficient money on all types of schools; parity of esteem can only be won by the schools themselves and must also depend on the particular social pattern and idealism outside. If some occupations carry more honour and reward than others, the schools which prepare their pupils for those occupations will inevitably have a greater prestige. It is easy for the idealist to assert that all callings are equally honourable, that the dustman is serving the community as much as the doctor and the engineer; but in their hearts the majority of people do not think so.

The emergence of the classless society in the near future is a Utopian dream. The machine civilization of our age, while it moves towards a greater fusion of classes and greater flexibility of opportunity, tends, in some ways, to differentiate the more gifted from the less gifted to a greater degree than did the simpler economic structures of earlier times. Many must be employed, in order that a machine civilization can function at all, in routine tasks, requiring little intelligence, while more is demanded of the minority holding positions of direction and control than ever before. At a time when so much is not yet clear, the adherents of the 'gradualist' school of thought, while advocating the widest measure of educational opportunity for all, so that ability may be given its full scope from whatever social stratum it may spring, urge a certain caution in launching out on too sweeping egalitarian experiments.

Some go further and not only utter a warning against too great speed, but also question the validity of the current cult of equality. They assert that, while it is theologically possible to regard all men as equal, in that all are children of the same

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Heavenly Father, in function and talent they are highly differentiated, called upon to fulfil different tasks, demanding different degrees of dedication and ability; and so needing different sorts of education. Unless, they maintain, the educationalist faces these facts objectively and realistically, and plans accordingly, an unstable society will be created which will end in disaster. It is fatally easy, under the conditions of our age, as recent history has shown, to press the claims of liberty and equality in such a way and in such a form that conditions are created in which both liberty and equality disappear. To those who argue thus, the paramount need, if the benefits of democracy are to be preserved, is to accept frankly the necessity, inherent in the nature of man and his environment, of classes and grades, although striving to make them as fluid as possible, and to aim at the creation of a broad-based aristocracy.

To such the, as yet undefined, relationship between the independent schools, not incorporated in the state system, and the state grammar schools, both of which have come more and more to fulfil the same function of educating the talented minority, is an issue of great importance. They see a danger lest the attempt to bring about a greater uniformity and equality within the state system should result in an undesirable cleavage between the independent schools and the state grammar schools.

During recent years these two groups have drawn closer together. The grammar schools of the state system have tended to approximate more and more to the public schools. Headmasters of state grammar schools have been elected to the Headmasters' Conference, membership of which confers the status of 'public school'. The 197 public schools, whose headmasters are members of the Headmasters' Conference, include not only the great independent boarding schools but also many grammar schools, dependent, to a lesser or greater extent, on public funds. Since all education after eleven plus has, as a result of the Education Act, become secondary, there may be a growing tendency to equate the grammar schools with the new secondary (old senior) schools, to curtail their freedom, to subject them to restrictive regulations and to treat them as mere units in a central-

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ized system. This has already happened in the areas of some, though happily not of all, education authorities. Should the essential freedom and individuality of the grammar schools be destroyed and their standards of scholarship lowered, their character would inevitably change and the cleavage between them and the independent schools become even more marked than at present.

The present situation is an interim and fluid one, typical of the English way of doing things; it cannot be permanent; the independent and state grammar schools will draw further apart or closer together. How it will develop will depend on a number of factors, economic, social and administrative. A further shift to the Left might result in the abolition of the independent public schools altogether and the setting up of a more or less uniform system of state education. Of that there are as yet few signs; one cynical schoolmaster was heard to remark recently: 'X (a famous public school was named) has a longer waiting list than ever before; mostly the sons of Labour M.P.'s.'

If, on the other hand, Burnham's thesis, put forward in *The Managerial Revolution*, turns out, in general outline, to be a reasonably correct diagnosis, as well it might, one may anticipate the perpetuation of something very like the public school system of the nineteenth century. Burnham's thesis is that the era of *bourgeois* capitalism is nearing its end, but that it will be replaced, not, as many believe, by some form of international socialism or a more egalitarian type of society, but by the emergence of a new dominant class, whom he calls the 'managers'. By these he means those who have now come, more and more, in fact, to control the processes of production. Among them he includes the administrators who, through various political and economic departments, play an increasingly influential part in the direction and control of production in the modern centralized state. This new dominant class, commanding the greatest wealth and influence, might claim for their own children, as such dominant classes have done in the past, a superior form of education, financially impossible for the majority. The

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public schools would then become the schools of this new wealthy class, as they were of the old. Something like this appears to be happening in Soviet Russia. Whatever the future pattern may turn out to be, it is improbable that the rigid social divisions Burnham anticipates will be formed in England. For the English tradition is to keep social divisions fluid and to carry through a shift of power and influence by a gradual incorporation of the new emerging dominant class with the old.

A closer association in function and character of the independent public schools with the grammar schools of the state system, either happening spontaneously or carried out deliberately, would be in accordance with the English tradition. This fusion would involve a double process, a modification in the character of the independent schools side by side with a modification in that of the grammar schools of the state system.

This double process has already started. As has already been seen, a number of state grammar schools have drawn closer in their life and standards to the independent public school; some have, without any material alteration of their social character, attained public school status. A broadening of the social structure of state grammar schools is, moreover, probable. To send a boy to one of the independent public boarding schools costs about £250 a year, sometimes a little less, sometimes considerably more. With income tax at nine shillings in the pound, this means that a parent must earn between £400 and £500 a year to meet the expenses of one son at an independent boarding school. Many parents belonging to the professional classes who might, in the past, have sent their sons to one of these schools as a matter of course, will, particularly if they have several children, be no longer able to do so, and will send them to state grammar schools. On the other hand, independent public boarding schools have already begun to admit a small number of boys educated in primary schools and the number of these state scholars is likely slowly to increase. They will tend, moreover, to draw an increasing number of their pupils from a new wealthy class. Thus, the social structure of both the

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independent public schools and the state grammar schools will tend gradually to approximate to each other.

Thus, provided that the state grammar schools are allowed to retain their present selective character and essential liberties, the evolution of a new balance among the schools whose task has been, and is still likely to be, to educate the more gifted minority of the community is not improbable.

While boarding houses have not been lacking in some state grammar schools, the development of the boarding school as a form of community living has been the particular feature of the independent public school. Indeed to many the term 'public school' signifies a boarding school which is independent of state aid. The Education Act extends facilities for boarding school education, at the public expense, for those who cannot otherwise afford it. In the coming years it may come to be considered as a desirable element in the education of all children, not only by children being educated at state expense at the great independent boarding schools, but also by the extension of boarding accommodation in schools of the state system.

So far the provision of boarding school education within the state system is not conceived on very imaginative lines; it tends to be limited to those who, for one reason or another, would not fit well into a day school or who are handicapped in their attendance at a day school for geographical reasons. Boarding school education as a desirable element in the education of all has, as yet, hardly been considered. My own proposal, based on my observation of the heavy strain imposed on the Sixth Form boy at a developed day grammar school, a strain far greater than that borne by a similar boy at a boarding school, of residential Sixth Forms, has, so far, not found much practical support from those in authority.

Nevertheless, the introduction of wider facilities for boarding school education may turn out to be another factor in the drawing together of schools of different types and causing them to approximate more to each other.

Though there have been fears among those working in the state grammar school field that egalitarian zeal would destroy

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the essential character of the grammar school, these fears may turn out to be groundless.

Adaptations there will doubtless have to be in order to meet the demands of a more highly planned society and the changes in social and economic pattern which will result from it. So much will depend on the impact of social forces which are not yet clear that it would be foolish to try to prophesy exactly.

So far, however, the influence of the Whig tradition is evident. The principle of organic development has not been abandoned. The instinct of the existing privileged class to maintain as much as possible of its own position has combined with the inherent English conviction, that it is best to proceed by gradual stages and not to try to reform too much by political action, to dictate a fundamentally illogical and impermanent solution of the educational problem. The logical plan of initiating a uniform system of free education for all, since it might have resulted in the destruction of some of the most valuable elements in the education of the past, has been rejected. Much has been left to the play of circumstance. This is all in the true Whig tradition.

The appropriate balance has not been reached. Much remains to be worked out by the method of trial and error and the resolution of healthy tensions. Old and new have yet to be fused into a new synthesis. The task will be to widen educational opportunity and create a vivid school life for all, without unfitting many for the functions they must fulfil in after life; to preserve and extend that freedom and individuality, which is the life-blood of the vigorous school community, and at the same time equate it with the needs of a planned society; to create a greater measure of social cohesion and bring about a greater social stability, in so far as this can be brought about through education, by the greatest degree of common education, while at the same time not sacrificing quality to quantity nor preventing the more gifted minority, on whom so much depends, from attaining their full stature.

Provided that the stresses which will have to be met in the coming years are not too great, one is not fearful that the Whig

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tradition will be abandoned. For the Whig tradition is inherent in our history and in our thinking. It is not confined to this political school of thought or that; some of its most effective exponents have borne the label of 'Tory'. It is the heritage of the English people, the fruit of centuries of steady, consistent evolution. It is, in its essence, the English genius.

## II

### THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS—A PLEA FOR A COMPREHENSIVE POLICY<sup>1</sup>

**T**o venture to write on the future of public schools is dangerous. Whatever I say I am sure to throw myself open to criticism and attack. First let me state the basic opinions on which the conclusions I have reached are founded.

I consider that quality is as important as, perhaps more important than, quantity. While I desire that all should receive an adequate education suitable to the needs of each, I believe that the well-being of England demands that the highest types of the country's boyhood should receive the best possible sort of education, without regard to birth and wealth. At present many do not. Criticism of public schools is easy, and some of it is just; nevertheless I believe that the public-school tradition is the most valuable contribution this country has made to educational thought and practice. As a rough generalization I would say that the boy who can secure a public-school education is more fortunate than one who has through force of circumstance to be educated at any average state grammar school. The duality of the English system of education—or should one say, lack of system—whereby those who can afford it send their sons to public schools and those who cannot to state grammar schools is, therefore, to be deprecated. Either the public schools are privileged preserves, perpetuating an out-of-date culture and class distinctions alien to our age, as some of their critics assert, in which case the sooner they disappear the better, or they are the repositories of an educational tradition, in need of adapta-

<sup>1</sup> This article first appeared in the *Journal of Education*, December 1940, as part of a symposium on the public schools.



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tion to present conditions, but yet of intrinsic worth. If the latter is true, and I believe it is, then the real problem of the future of the public schools is not primarily how a small group of independent boarding schools may be preserved from an extinction which may threaten them, but how a public-school education may be made available for every boy, irrespective of his birth or the wealth of his parents, who, in the interests of the community, is worthy to receive it.

Before expanding this latter point, however, it is desirable to inquire in what way a school in the public-school tradition may be said to be superior to that of a state school. Put very broadly the distinction between public and state schools is one of educational ideal. The public school has always regarded itself as a self-educative community, that is as a closely linked society, the members of which are trained as much—perhaps more so—by the contacts and activities of a life lived in common as by definite instruction. That is not to say that scholarship is neglected or regarded as unimportant; the development of character is, however, considered the first task of the school. In contrast, the state school, while not entirely denying the value of community, has tended to place the emphasis on instruction. The school is regarded as a place where certain 'subjects' are taught at certain times; while much of the training which a public school would regard as educationally essential is given the significant name of 'out-of-school activities', and in some schools regarded as optional. That in recent years many state schools have tended to approximate in ideal to the public schools does not invalidate the distinction drawn. Public schools have, moreover, openly stressed the importance of the practice of the Christian religion; the school chapel has always been a central pivot of public school life. State schools, due partly to inter-denominational jealousies, have tended to accept a secular ideal of education.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> While the Education Act makes a daily corporate act of worship compulsory for all state schools, a chapel, an all-important element in Christian education, appears to be as yet virtually denied to state schools. True, an aided or voluntary controlled grammar school, which already has a chapel, will be allowed to retain it, but money will have to be subscribed from other

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If one believes that the training a boy receives through the community life of a school is of infinite worth, that to substitute instruction for education is a fatal error, that the creation of a Christian society in miniature is the fundamental task of a school, then one cannot but regard the public school as superior to the state school and desire, not the extinction of those schools which have given this idea its most perfect flowering, but a form of extension which will enable a far greater number to fall within its influence.

There are some who maintain that a public-school education in its fullest sense is possible only in a boarding school. While education through community is in some ways easier in a boarding school than in a day school, experience has shown that, given the right conditions, a rich and vital community life can be developed in a day school. There is, moreover, much to be said for a boy's growing up in constant contact with real life rather than in monastic seclusion. The provision of a public-school education for all worthy to receive it does not, therefore, necessarily involve the provision of large numbers of new boarding schools, a plan perhaps financially impossible. It may, however, involve the creation of a type of day school with more space, a different sort of accommodation and a different sort of organization than is at present typical.<sup>1</sup>

So far discussions on the future of the public schools have tended to concentrate on devising some sort of plan whereby state aid can be given to schools, at present financially independent, whose continued existence may be threatened by a falling birth-rate among the wealthier classes and the decrease in the number of those able to pay the high fees which public schools often demand.<sup>2</sup> It has been proposed that in return for accepting than public sources to maintain it. If the school should move to a new site the task of raising money to provide a chapel will fall on the Governors.

<sup>1</sup> I believe that my own proposal to set up residential Sixth Forms in state grammar schools, whereby all boys, who so wished, could obtain a period of boarding-school education during the latter stage of their school careers, is worthy of very careful examination.

<sup>2</sup> This was written in 1940. So far (1948) there has been no proposal to give financial aid to independent schools other than the payment of fees of such state scholars as they accept.

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a proportion of scholars from elementary schools, state aid, in some form or other, should be given to these independent schools. Any such plan raises a number of problems. It may be said in passing that any suggestion to recruit these scholars from the elementary schools at thirteen plus through the day schools which have accepted them at eleven plus would meet with strong opposition from these schools,<sup>1</sup> on the grounds that it would be depriving them, in order to maintain a few independent schools already privileged, of those potential prefects and sixth formers who are their main strength.<sup>2</sup> One problem stands out above all others: if the State consented to give financial assistance would it also demand control, and in what measure? That type of education for which the public schools stand can flourish only if it is in all essential matters free to develop without outside interference. It cannot be created or perpetuated from above; it can be created and perpetuated only from within. The independent public schools distrust public control. They foresee the danger of becoming mere units in a system in which vital decisions are taken by committees which may perhaps be unsympathetic with, perhaps know nothing about, their own particular problems and ideals. This, they feel, would not only impair their real efficiency, but also result in the destruction of much they rightly hold dear.

Yet it is possible to envisage a form of public control which would be acceptable to schools now financially independent and might with benefit be extended to those schools within the state system called upon to co-operate in a plan whereby an education of public-school type may be made available for all able to receive it. The amount of public control exercised over English schools varies. Schools in receipt of direct grant are free

<sup>1</sup> The Headmasters' Conference, very wisely, rejected all idea of recruiting candidates for scholarships at independent boarding schools from state grammar schools at thirteen plus.

<sup>2</sup> It is perhaps desirable to qualify this argument. The most important thing is the well-being of the individual boy. What is to be avoided is the assumption, in thought and action, that an independent boarding school is necessarily better than a state day school; for that would result in the stultification of the development of the grammar school.

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from the control of local authorities, aided schools are subject to less control from local authorities than maintained schools. For the type of control, not uncommon, under which the schools within an area are organized on a more or less standardized pattern and in which all receive approximately the same treatment and conform to the same regulations, might be substituted, on a much more general scale, one which would ensure that public money was properly spent and that all schools were carrying out their functions efficiently, but would regard each school as a separate spiritual and actual entity, capable of a maximum of self-determination, each rightly claiming a wide measure of differential treatment. Freedom of individual development is, moreover, not entirely a matter of financial control or absence of it. A school financially independent but handicapped by financial worry or by the fear that a bold policy may alienate the parents of potential entrants or possible benefactors may be less free in essential matters than one working under and in co-operation with an enlightened local authority.

Provided adequate safeguards against the wrong sort of public control could be devised, provided any accusation of privileged treatment were avoided by extending to those state schools carrying out the same functions the same freedom accorded to the public schools willing to accept a measure of state control, one might look forward to the evolution of an educational system, in which public and state schools would be fused, fairer, richer, and more effective in training the citizens of a new age than that which exists at present.

We cannot go back to the conditions of 1939. The old social order is dying. Whether we wish it or not, a new one is coming to birth and in its creation education must play a crucial part. In order effectively to meet the stresses which we shall be called upon to face, in order to create a new social order in an atmosphere and spirit of harmony and good will, we need three things. We need, I believe, a broad-based body of trained leadership, drawn freely from all classes, a sort of enlightened directive core in the life of the community, impelling it and inspiring it towards high and unselfish ends. We need a much deeper sense of

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community, a common idealism and aim among all classes towards which all can enthusiastically and harmoniously work. We need a much more widespread acceptance of the duty of service, a greater degree of social awareness and social dedication. To the schools we must look for the training of youth in these qualities and these virtues, and it is through schools which draw their inspiration from the public-school tradition that these qualities and these virtues are most likely to be engendered.

In a short article such as this one can only state the problem as one sees it and indicate an ideal. To attain that ideal will demand imagination, sacrifice, bold thinking, the spirit of adaptation and compromise. Only in the degree that these are present in the Headmasters' Conference, in the Government, among local education authorities, is it possible of attainment.

### III

#### THE LOCAL AUTHORITY AND THE SCHOOLS: A STUDY IN HARMONIOUS RELATIONSHIP<sup>1</sup>

One of the most important tasks in putting into operation that reconstruction of English education contemplated in the Education Bill will be to establish a right relationship between L.E.A.'s and the schools in their areas.

Reduced to general terms, the problem is one of combining efficient centralized planning with the freedom of the individual units within the plan, while at the same time ensuring that in all things a human rather than a mechanistic philosophy is the guiding principle in determining action. For an L.E.A. to treat schools merely as cogs in a system or children as numbers on a card index is to depart from that human philosophy which must be the basis of all healthy planning. As Wiltshire has worked out modes of procedure in which a human philosophy is expressed, and through which the freedom of the individual school has been preserved, it may be worth while to describe some aspects of that procedure. Similar modes of procedure have probably been worked out in other areas, but it is evident that in some areas very different methods are adopted.

One of the most important freedoms of the school is that which has been called the 'veto on admission', that is, the right of each school to choose, under appropriate safeguards against abuse,

<sup>1</sup> This article was written at the time when the Education Bill was being debated in Parliament and appeared in the *Times Educational Supplement*, February 1944. The fundamental matters with which it deals are as relevant now as they were when it was written. Where, in the original article, the adjective, 'secondary', was used to describe a school now called a grammar school, the word, 'grammar', has been substituted.

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those who are admitted to its community. This is the opposite of the not uncommon practice of the allocation by the L.E.A. of pupils to schools on the results of a centralized entrance examination, whereby heads of schools are denied any effective share in the choice of those for whose education they will be responsible.

When, in 1933, the 100 per cent special place system, a system under which all vacancies in grammar schools are filled on merit and the fee charged to all is based on the income of the parent, was introduced in Wiltshire, there were some misgivings among the heads of grammar schools lest the L.E.A. intended to constitute itself the final arbiter on who should or should not be admitted to grammar schools. That has happened in other areas, with the result that the 100 per cent special place system has few supporters among the heads of grammar schools. Such fears, however, proved groundless. Not only has the final choice of all admissions been left to the heads of schools and their governors but merit has been interpreted as all-round suitability for grammar school education, not merely ability to gain marks in a catastrophic one-day examination. It has thus been possible to evolve a technique in which all concerned, the L.E.A., governors and heads of grammar schools, and heads of junior schools, each have their appropriate share. This technique has not only won almost universal approval, but has, as careful surveys have shown, proved very efficient in selecting the most suitable all-round candidates.

The formal written examination, consisting of an intelligence test and papers in English and arithmetic, is carried out by a chief examiner, appointed by the L.E.A. His mark list, which is secret, is circulated to the heads of grammar schools, who then draw up the final order of merit on which admission to individual schools is based. Heads of schools are free to use any additional evidence they wish to determine merit. School reports (to which great weight is given) and oral examinations of all candidates are universally used. Some schools allow candidates to offer evidence of special ability in such things as music, art, and manual work. There are close personal contacts with heads

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of preparatory and junior schools, who are consulted before the final admission list is decided.

As an 'appropriate safeguard against abuse', any head may be called upon to justify his selections and show the reasons which have dictated his choice of candidates. Such a safeguard is desirable, and no head can reasonably object to his findings being examined any more than he could object to his accounts being audited. Since the assessment of fees is left in the hands of a committee of the Governors of each school, this somewhat delicate task has never caused the slightest trouble.

It is probable that a universal 100 per cent special place system would not only give as great equality of opportunity as the abolition of all tuition fees, but would also be more in accordance with the English temperament. Since schools in which at present no fees are charged will become secondary schools, there are obvious administrative objections to a universal 100 per cent special place system, but, even should all tuition fees be abolished, the value of Wiltshire experience will remain. For these techniques of diagnosis and selection are equally applicable whether or not fees are charged, provided that L.E.A.'s and schools are prepared to co-operate.

It has been argued that the procedure described is unworkable when admission to several schools is involved. All the evidence points to the conclusion that, provided the heads of grammar and modern schools are willing to work together in harmonious co-operation, there are no inherent difficulties.

Another interesting development in Wiltshire has been the evolution of the Conference of Heads of Grammar Schools. This conference was originally started as a means whereby heads of schools could meet county education officials and discuss common problems. It has, in the course of time, become something much more significant, a committee of experts, putting forward to the County Education Committee recommendations on matters on which it is particularly competent to advise. The County Education Committee is giving increasing weight to its recommendations and its function may become of very great importance in the future. Through this conference and



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through the inevitable day-to-day contacts heads and officials have come to regard themselves as necessary and friendly partners, intimately associated in the carrying out of a common task.

The Education Bill lays down a pattern of objective and organization. When it is passed the real work will begin. A great share of that work will fall to L.E.A.'s; but the most important part will fall to the schools. They alone can make the pattern live. Will not that part be carried out more effectively and harmoniously if the heads of schools feel that they are definite partners in determining the details of L.E.A. policy rather than mere instruments through whom it is expected to be put into effect?

I could tell how in all Wiltshire schools assistant masters and mistresses are chosen, not by a county committee, but by the governors of grammar schools and, in some schools, by the head alone, which is surely the only sound and efficient method. I could write of the ways in which the governors of schools are consulted in the framing of general policy and the scrupulous attention given to their observations. I prefer, however, to conclude on a deeper note.

If our civilization is to be a Christian one, our institutions must be Christian. I believe that the success and harmony of our procedure in Wiltshire are due to the fact that it has been inspired by a conception essentially Christian in character.

To treat schools as mere units in a system, instead of living communities, organic in their nature, to treat children as ciphers to be allotted to this school or that, to try to control, instead of to co-operate with and care for, schools is to adopt an attitude of domination rather than fellowship. A good many L.E.A.'s are guilty of that fault. It will be a strong temptation in putting the provisions of the Education Bill into practice, because it will be the easy way. But it will be fatal to real education and it will be a departure from true Christian ethics. Is it likely that a Christian education will develop in schools if the whole pattern and organization is, to say the least, sub-Christian?

## IV

### THE FUNCTION OF A GOVERNING BODY IN THE STATE GRAMMAR SCHOOL<sup>1</sup>

In the leading article on School Governance, which appeared in *The Times Educational Supplement* on 4th March, it was argued that the problem was 'one of combining efficient centralized planning with the freedom of the individual units within the plan, while at the same time ensuring that in all things a human rather than a mechanistic philosophy is the guiding principle in determining action'. Attention was drawn to the need of defining with clarity and precision the respective responsibilities of all the partners concerned with a school. Most of those concerned with the task of education would agree.

But the vitally practical issue, the sort of governing body which can most effectively work in a spirit of mutual trust and common purpose with the local education authority on the one hand and the headmaster and his staff on the other was avoided. This is a problem to which insufficient attention has as yet been given.

It is necessary, in the first place, to realize that the governing body of a school solely or largely dependent on public funds is different in the nature of its functioning from the governing body of an independent or well-endowed aided school. While the governing body of these latter types of school is the final authority on both finance and general policy, that of a school of the former type is not only financially dependent on a higher authority but has only a limited control over general policy. The finance committee of the local education authority is the final arbiter on what money shall be spent and, to some extent, on how it shall be spent. The education committee of the local

<sup>1</sup> This article appeared in *The Times Educational Supplement*, April 1944.

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education authority, responsible for the educational pattern of the whole area, is the initiator and controller of much of the educational policy (though it may wisely consult with governors and headmasters in framing it) which affects the character and conduct of the schools within the area.

This difference in the nature and function of the respective governing bodies affects the position of the headmasters in the two types of school. The headmaster of an independent school works directly with the body controlling finance and general policy; his task is a comparatively easy one. The headmaster of a school under a local education authority has a more complicated task; if he wants to get anything done he has to work through a body which is not an ultimate authority and whose contact with the ultimate authority may be of an impersonal character.

The task of a governing body of a school dependent on public funds is thus in some ways more delicate and difficult than that of an independent school. It is beset by two dangers. Its desire to maintain its own independence and the freedom of the school it governs may give rise to friction and lack of co-operation with the local education authority; or it may become merely an instrument of local education authority control, exercising no influence or initiative of itself and ceasing to be a governing body in a real sense at all. In both cases the position of the headmaster is difficult and the school he serves suffers.

It is essential that the nature and function of the governing body of a school dependent on public funds should be fully understood and frankly accepted by those who serve on it if both its own efficiency and harmonious working with the local education authority on the one hand and with the headmaster on the other is to be attained. It is a member of a balanced and necessary trinity, having an independent entity of its own, but incomplete without the two other members of that trinity. It must be able not only to work in the fullest co-operation and understanding with the local education authority but also to adapt and influence local education authority policy to meet the individual needs and traditions of the particular school it governs

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and to defend the essential freedom and initiative of that school against undesirable over-centralized control.

How well the governing body of a school dependent on public funds is able to carry out its task will depend both on its structure and on the character of the persons serving on it. Can one suggest an effective structure? How can one make certain of getting the right people? It is not possible to put forward any cut-and-dried solution. The following suggestions may, however, be worthy of examination.

It is necessary to equate efficiency with popular interest and control. A correct balance may perhaps be ensured by visualizing a typical governing body as consisting of a lesser and greater council. To the lesser council, small in number and made up of persons deliberately chosen for their suitability for this special work, would fall the task, in co-operation with the headmaster, of dealing with those matters which demand wide experience and expert knowledge. The greater council, larger in number, would be of a more representative and popular character. It would maintain necessary local interest and would prevent the lesser council from degenerating into an exclusive cabal. On it those most personally concerned with the efficiency of a school, the parents, should be strongly represented. Members of sub-committees would be freely drawn from both councils.

It could be argued that a governing body so composed, since its most powerful element would be co-opted rather than elected, would not be, in any true sense, democratic. To this one may reply that in these days democracy is unlikely to endure unless it can find efficient instruments to carry out its purpose. Further, democracy is changing. We appear to be moving away from 'sectional democracy', based on the representative principle, towards what may be called 'the democracy of the good life', the winning, for the greatest number, of the maximum amount of opportunity, well-being, and security by whatever means are most appropriate for any specific purpose. Since popular control of schools is secured by their financial dependence on the local education authority, there appears to be no valid reason why governing bodies should be solely built up on

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the representative principle, if greater harmony and efficiency can be secured, and the right people attracted, by other means.

It is probable that a governing body of the type suggested would be more efficient for practical purposes, be able to work more harmoniously with a local education authority, and, at the same time, be a surer defence of the freedom of the individual school than one of the type now most common.

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the greatest headmaster, of his time and that he has made an outstanding and permanent contribution to educational thought and practice.

It is necessary, first of all, that the reader should have at least a general idea of what is meant by the Direct Method in the teaching of languages. Simply expressed, to teach by the Direct Method is to teach a language by speaking it. If one were to watch a French class conducted on the Direct Method one would hear no word of English spoken; unless circumstance absolutely compelled it, all would be done in French. This is the natural way to learn a living language; one can hardly be said to have learnt French or German unless one had learnt to speak it. The case for the Direct Method in the teaching of a living language is not difficult to maintain; it is the way we have all learnt our own.

There was a time when it was a useful art to be able to speak Latin and Greek. Latin was the common language of all who laid any claim to culture. There is a story of how one day Queen Elizabeth soundly censured the Polish ambassador in vigorous Latin and, doubtless, he well understood what that outspoken woman said to him. Up to the eighteenth century it was customary to speak Latin in schools.

There is, however, no need in these days to be proficient in Latin or Greek as spoken languages. Apart from the learning of the classical languages as a mental gymnastic, a case I am not prepared to argue here, one learns a classical language in order to be able to read and enjoy its literature. Why then learn to speak it? It is surely a waste of time and energy.

Rouse never argued that Latin and Greek should be taught on the Direct Method so that his pupils might be able to carry on a conversation in those tongues, though actually the best of them could do so. What he maintained was that to base the teaching of Latin and Greek on the spoken word was the best way of learning to read these languages; it saved time and gave reality and life to the work.

'I hope it is equally clear', he wrote, 'that we are free from the reproach—that we teach Latin and Greek in order to be

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able to talk. The opposite is true; we talk in order to teach.'<sup>1</sup>

His argument was that this method of teaching through speaking was the natural, and therefore the most effective, way of teaching, that through it the ultimate objective of being able to read the classical literature easily and with enjoyment was most quickly and certainly attained.

I believe this to be true. For some eight years, during which I was an assistant master at the Perse School, I was able to see what actually happened. That boys enjoyed their lessons in Latin and Greek was clear; that, because they were taught in this way, the majority of them were, without any pressure, prepared to work hard and developed high powers of attention was also evident; that, even if they did not go into the Classical Sixth, they had not only gained something of permanent cultural worth but had also received the sort of groundwork which enabled them to read Latin and Greek more easily than if they had been taught in another way seemed to me to be obvious.

It is not my object in this essay to describe the techniques of the Direct Method in detail. I should not be competent to do so. I must touch, however, on some of its main features.

It was the expression in one particular field of what was being done at the Perse School, and also in other places, in other fields, the expression of a conception of education which made the boy its centre. Rouse put the matter very clearly in the chapter he wrote in *The New Teaching*:<sup>2</sup>

'Classics, too, must be brought into touch with their life and their natural impulses, and it must be kept there: thus only can the necessary hard work be done with a gusto, thus only can we keep them always young; but the thing is possible if we guide and stimulate instead of repressing and imposing. The boy is the centre of education; what is within him it is our part to draw out, to cultivate, to bring under control of his will, and to do this we must always imagine ourselves in his place.

<sup>1</sup> Adams (editor): *The New Teaching*. Chap. IV, 'The Classics', by Dr. W. H. D. Rouse. (Hodder & Stoughton, 1919.)

<sup>2</sup> op. cit., page 129.



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'Imagine, then, a young boy, full of life, full of curiosity, eager to be doing something: when you give him a book full of Latin declensions, and force him to learn them, without using them in any way except to translate idiotic sentences signifying nothing, how does that appear to him? Will he not ask, What has that to do with me? Such a task is repugnant to a boy in proportion as he is intelligent; he hates it and he is quite right to hate it; it can only be imposed on him by force, or by telling him that if he works he will get a scholarship or something of that sort. Thus his first impression of work realized by him to be intellectual is in itself repugnant, and it is associated with a sordid aim. But show him Latin is a language in which he can express his own feelings and describe his own actions or the world he lives in; tell him that by learning it he will win the key to many stories like those of Horatius, and to other things of more value still, he is as eager to learn as you are to teach.'

Thus in the early lessons under the Direct Method, as indeed until the end, unless some special need compels, English is only used if the Latin fails. A Latin vocabulary for common acts and things is built up and constantly used. Thus the foreign word, or phrase, or sentence, is associated directly with a thing or an act or a thought. Thus from the first the boy is given the *feel* of the language, an instinct for its *idiom*. He does not start by learning, *puella, puellam, puellae* or *amo, amas, amat*. He starts straight away on what is called the Series, i.e. dialogues between master and pupils, with appropriate actions, which are memorized by the pupil, and through which the commonest grammatical forms, i.e. the present imperative and present indicative of all conjugations, together with some cases at least of all declensions, are learnt. Latin grammar is studied formally later—it must of course be so studied—but only after it has been first learnt by use.

'The only difference is that under the Direct Method, they learn it (grammar) after they have used certain of these (grammatical) forms, or all of them, so that they know what the forms mean. But if they are put to learn them first, it is a task most irksome and to a boy quite unmeaning. Language is in fact

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taught as an art, and not as a science to begin with. Idiom is the first thing, and accuracy comes second.<sup>1</sup>

Paraphrase takes the place of translation of the Latin or Greek text into English. To give an idea of how it works the following example may be taken:

'Suppose the reading-lesson to include the three lines of Martial:

*Nullos esse deos, inane caelum  
Adfirmat Segius; probatque, quod se  
Factum, dum negat haec, videt beatum.*

'The master reads out the lines, which *ex hypothesi* have not been prepared by the class: and as a first step to explanation, asks:

MAGISTER. Quid primum adfirmat Segius?

PUER S. PUERI. Nullos esse deos adfirmat Segius.

M. Quid deinde adfirmat?

P. Inane esse caelum adfirmat.

M. Coniunge tu haec mutato ordine.

P. Segius adfirmat nullos deos esse, et inane esse caelum.

M. Intellegitisne omnes?

P. Nescio quid sit inane.

M. Inane idem est quod vacuum, quod nihil in se habet, hic scilicet quod deos habet in se nullos.

P. Iam intellego.

M. Pergamus ad alteram clausulam: quid probat Segius?

P. Nescimus quid probet Segius.

M. Nempe probat hoc verum esse, nullos esse deos probat esse verum, probat inane deis esse caelum.

P. Intellegimus.

M. Quid intellegitis?

P. Probare Segium nullos esse deos et cetera.

M. It . Quare igitur, qua ratione?

P. Quod se beatum esse videt.

M. Quando se beatum esse videt?

P. Dum haec negat, videt se esse beatum.

<sup>1</sup> Rouse: 'The Direct Method in Teaching Latin and Greek' (in *Latin Teaching*, April 1924.)

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M. Quamvis igitur haec neget, quamquam haec negat, nihilominus se esse beatum videt. Scribite iam prosa oratione id quod significat poeta; post haec vertite Anglice.

'I think it is clear that the meaning of the lines will be known after this drill: if however the English translation shows this not to have been the case, more care will be taken in the next lesson.'<sup>1</sup>

To watch a lesson with a Sixth Form was a thrilling experience. Two to three hundred lines of a Latin or Greek author were read in an hour and a half. I remember how impressive I found it, when I was present at one before I started on my career as a schoolmaster. There was no translation into English, yet it was clear that what was read was understood. There was a constant give and take between the master and the class; the classroom was alive. It is impossible to describe one of these classes. Some idea of what they were like can be gained from *Scenes from Sixth Form Life*,<sup>2</sup> a series of transcripts of actual lessons, which Rouse wrote, partly from memory, partly from notes jotted down at the time, after his active headmastership was over.<sup>3</sup>

The natural classical scholar will probably emerge however he is taught. Though brilliant classical scholars were produced through the Direct Method, possibly the type of boy who gained the most by being taught in this way was the boy of moderate ability. He, I believe, got far more out of his classical studies than he would have done under any other method. He gained a feeling for and a love of classical literature, together with a capacity to read it easily which I, who had, in my schooldays, known Allen's Latin Grammar practically by heart, envied exceedingly. For though I had spent a great deal of time on the study of the Classics, I never got that feel for the Latin and

<sup>1</sup> Rouse: 'Classical Work and Method in the Twentieth Century' (*Rivista di Scienza 'Scientia'*. Vol. IV, Anno II (1908), N.VII, published by Nicola Zanichelli, Bologna.)

<sup>2</sup> Basil Blackwood, 1935.

<sup>3</sup> The reader who wishes to pursue the subject further should read: Rouse and Appleton: *Latin on the Direct Method*. (University of London Press, 1925.)

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Greek languages which would have enabled me to read them fluently in the way these Perse boys seemed to get it.

Why then was this attempt of Rouse to reform the teaching of Latin and Greek a virtual failure? Why did he win so few followers? Was it due to that inertia, that reluctance to try out anything which seemed new or strange, which is, alas, a common trait among schoolmasters? Was it that to teach on the Direct Method demanded a greater skill, a greater knowledge, a greater capacity to take pains than the average classical teacher possessed? Was the method not sufficiently foolproof for a headmaster to consider it safe for an average member of his staff? Or did that timidity, that fear of taking risks, which has been one of the unfortunate results of a highly organized system of public examinations—boys at the Perse did not normally take the School Certificate Examination unless they needed it for some special purpose—play a decisive part in holding back those who might otherwise have followed Rouse in his reforms?

Perhaps the reasons do not now matter very much; the fact remains that Rouse has won comparatively few disciples prepared to put his methods into practice. Very few of those natural homes of the Classics, the great independent public schools, have taken the slightest notice of him.

Yet, despite this failure to convert teachers of the classical languages to the Direct Method, I consider that Rouse's contribution to educational thought and practice was profound and lasting. For that which Rouse called the Direct Method was something much more than a technique of teaching classical languages. It was a new spirit, a new attitude towards and a new approach to the whole of education, a spirit, an attitude, an approach which has now happily become common in schools of different types and is so widespread that the part Rouse played is forgotten. The Direct Method is simply one name for that type of education which makes the boy its centre, which moulds itself to his needs, his interests and his aspirations, which, because it is creative, spontaneous and vital, has something of the nature of 'play', a form of education in which the boy is a 'maker' and 'joys in the making'.

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Because Rouse was not a mere abstract thinker, but a practising headmaster and a gifted original teacher, he expressed his vision in practical forms. He created a school, in which his ideal of education was seen in every aspect of its life and work; he evolved a particular method in the teaching of Latin and Greek which conformed with that ideal. Both were expressions of the same ideal, the one in a universal, the other in a particular form.

To appreciate Rouse's lasting contribution to education it is necessary that both the distinction and the relationship between its universal and its particular expression should be understood. The universal expression was, however, the more important and represents Rouse's lasting contribution to education. That new spirit, that new technique, for which he stood, and in which he was one of the great pioneers, is now part of the stuff of English education. In a report to the Governors of the Perse School, given in 1927, just before his retirement, he summed up what he had accomplished as follows:

'The net result of our present system in the Perse School is, that we have a new type of schoolboy; one who takes as real an interest in things intellectual as he does in games. I do not say as great an interest (in many it may be less); but as real an interest; so that those who do the elements of Greek or Latin are as happy in their work as they are in their football.'

That new type of schoolboy is now so common that one no longer regards him as new; one forgets how rare he was when Rouse became headmaster of the Perse School in the first decade of this century. In him is found Rouse's permanent achievement.

Had Rouse launched his campaign for a reform in the teaching of the Classics in a different environment he might have succeeded. His proposals were not really revolutionary; though new and strange to his contemporaries, they represented a return to what had once been common practice. Circumstances were, however, against him. Those who were willing to follow the lead of the educational pioneer were not interested in the Classics; those who were interested in the teaching of the

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Classics were not prepared to launch out on what were for them new paths.

Now the study of the Classics is waning. How long they will continue to be used as an instrument of education, except for the very few, is doubtful. Even though one may believe in the great value of a classical education, it is difficult to feel that an education based on the Classics is one best suited to present needs. We live in an age of science and technology, of large-scale planning and changing cultural groupings; new social classes are coming to power, new ways of living being evolved. Possibly our two greatest educational needs are a humanistic culture based on our own English literary heritage, and an approach to scientific studies which is both philosophical and sociological. While I know of no study so illuminating for an understanding of our own times as a study of Plato, the study of the classical languages has for the majority become an irrelevancy. It has ceased to be the basis of that humanism for which the modern world is searching.

The approach to education, necessary for the growth of that new humanism, is, however, that for which Rouse strove so valiantly, the approach which we may call the Direct Method. The instrument he himself used, the classical languages, was his own natural and personal instrument; but it is not the only one and not the one which most of us who follow him and carry on what he started may rightly use.

There is one virtue, however, that one may learn from Rouse's choice of instrument. One cannot use Latin and Greek as an instrument of education without inevitably absorbing an ideal of standard and quality, of love of beauty and love of truth. The danger in an education founded on the Direct Method is that it may so easily degenerate into something slack, inaccurate and slipshod. It was a fortunate chance that in the home of the Direct Method, which Rouse served as headmaster, the education should have been based on Latin and Greek. For it was thus possible to demonstrate in practice that an education which made the real boy its centre, in which 'work' tended to be synonymous with 'play', increased rather

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than decreased standard and quality and could be allied with attention, accuracy, scholarship and sustained, effective effort.

Rouse's active work is finished; but though over eighty years of age, his friends, who visit him in his retirement, find still the same fascinating and witty personality who fought the battle for the Direct Method with so great vigour. And his influence lives on, more penetrating now than it ever was. It goes on in the work of many who have never heard his name; but perhaps most strongly in those who had personal contact with him, particularly in that group of young headmasters whom he taught as boys and who now consciously carry on what he began.

And when the end comes, there will be no need to compose an epitaph. For it was written long ago:

'There dwells also an unwritten memorial of them, graven not on stone but in the hearts of men.'

## VI

### H. CALDWELL COOK AND THE PLAY WAY

I was fortunate in knowing Henry Caldwell Cook, the author of *The Play Way*, as friend and colleague at the Perse School, Cambridge. For over eight years we worked together, for six months we shared the same house. It was the reading of *The Play Way* which finally decided me, at the end of the first World War, to become a schoolmaster. Such contributions as I have been able to make to educational thought and practice had their beginnings in the thought and work of Rouse and Cook.

I do not think the vital contribution which Caldwell Cook made to educational theory and practice has been fully understood or appreciated. It is now sometimes customary to disparage or belittle it. Recently I heard it remarked—I think it was by an H.M.I.—that Cook had done more harm to the teaching of English than any other single man.

The judgement was both untrue and unfair; but I understood on what it was based. There have been some teachers who have tried to follow Cook's technique and, either through incompetence or misunderstanding, have failed badly. If they had kept to more humdrum, conventional methods, they might have succeeded better.

To me, however, who worked with Cook, his methods of teaching English seem to be so easy, so psychologically sound and so much more effective than more conventional ones that I cannot understand any normally competent teacher, once he has understood them, having any difficulty in using them. Not everyone is able to rise to Cook's heights. Cook taught superbly. A group of small boys whom he had taught for one or two years



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had a foundation, and a flexibility, which made them a joy to teach for the rest of their school careers.

Why then should educational techniques so good have not been more widely adopted? Why, after all these years, should there be disparagement? Something of what Cook taught and did has indeed become the commonplace of the Training Colleges and, to some extent, permeated educational practice. The revolution he initiated has had a partial success. It is no longer regarded as strange that schoolboys should write verse; dramatization is fairly common in schools; the standard of school plays had greatly improved. Yet seldom does one find that spate of verse which one could get from any good class at the Perse; still the middle schoolboy 'studies' Shakespeare from a book at a desk; still small boys are called upon to write 'essays'.

That Cook's revolution was not carried to the success it ought to have achieved is, in part, due to the inertia and resistance to change, which is a characteristic of schoolmasters. Passive methods of teaching are so much easier than active ones and demand so much less thought; it is much easier to follow the old rut than to strike out on new paths. Fear of examinations, which has been a real bar to experiment, has also been a factor. Teachers have hesitated to take risks which might ultimately result in failure in the School Certificate. The fear was groundless; but it was there.

There are deeper reasons, however, bound up with Cook's temperament and character. He was a genius, but with definite limitations which will be indicated later, a pioneer with something of the uncompromising attitude of the pioneer, a man of expert ability, inclined to be impatient of those less gifted than himself. Further there were two sides to Caldwell Cook, on one side he was a Utopian dreamer, on the other a brilliant craftsman in one branch of education. At first the two parts of him worked in harmony, the first fertilizing the second; later they clashed. Let me make my meaning clear.

When Cook returned to the Perse School after military service in 1919, those who had known him previously said he was

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changed. Something of his old vitality was lost; he seemed to be in some way frustrated. Though I did not go to the *Perse* until 1920, I noticed this sense of frustration and I do not think the reason is far to seek.

Cook's real contribution to educational practice lay in his experiments in the teaching of English, especially to children of pre-adolescent age. He called it the Play Way and, provided we remember that the play of children is full of purpose, it is a good name. The Play Way as a way of teaching English was in Cook's mind, however, bound up with something much bigger, with the dreams of an educational revolution, resulting in a new sort of school, which he christened the Play School Republic. He had much to say about in in *The Play Way*, the book he published in 1917, where he calls it a Little Commonwealth. A picture of it was sketched out earlier, in the introduction to the third of the *Perse Play Books*:<sup>1</sup>

'A visitor to the Play School would not find many of the usual classes going on, since quite half of them are unnecessary. Boys and girls of all ages would be found at their various occupations singly or in small groups, captained or not as the concern might require. A treasurer sits in his counting-house counting out his money; a small but very important civic functionary goes on his daily round to fill in the official registers. He visits numerous little buildings throbbing with activity, and encounters in turn the swish of the carpenter's plane, the irregular clatter of the weaver's loom, and the cheery clank of pails in the sunny dairy. He finds one master in his form reading-room indicating in one hour the answers to the body of urgent questions which his class has collected for him on that stretch of the subject; another giving a general superintendence to half a dozen classes working by themselves under his guidance; and a third bringing himself up to date in the latest discoveries of his pet squad of gardeners, or assisting at the investigation of some problem in poultry. A housekeeper directs the preparation of meals and the other household duties of the day. Here a senior boy or girl gives instruction in first-aid; here another adds to the fun at the sailing

<sup>1</sup> Heffer and Sons (Cambridge) 1913.

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pond by introducing laws of navigation, or gets himself detected of sharp business practice at the weekly market. In the home field the visitor might see the suspension of hedging and draining operations during a May-day revel with its inspiring folk-songs and dances, or at a later season join the swimmers during the dinner interval of a harvest noon. Apart from certain specified hours of indoor and outdoor leisure, the time of every member of the Play School Republic would be under the control of the executive body elected from among the citizens. Once a week, perhaps, the visitor might find the citizens applying to their authorities for the good report which gains them admission to the wonderful entertainment to which each in his turn must contribute. There he might see and hear examples, not only of all the best forms of instrumentation, together with song, dance and recitation, but displays of a virtuosity so foreign to his present content of belief that he must needs at first condemn them as unnatural.

'In a building set apart the visitor would find a perpetual though ever-changing exhibit of handicrafts; carving, pottery, textile fabrics, metal-work; and designs for use in any medium. In the evening he might hear the legislative body at their enactments, or attend the judiciary, or steal into the midst of that quiet assembly where one stands up before the rest to propose some new plan of his devising, whether it be the first voicing of a new campaign, or a daylight-saving bill, or a revised system of voting. And finally, before evening chapel and bed-time he might step apart into the long, dim hall where white Athena, and Hermes, and Aphrodite kept watch and ward, where coloured Venice and old France live again upon the walls, and where perchance some gentle young woman sits in the firelight telling a folk-tale of High Germany to three tiny boys and the Headmaster.'

As a sketch of a school it is incomplete, unpractical. It is too ethereal, too unworldly, too, if you like, 'arty-crafty'. Much of its spirit, many of its most valuable features, have gradually been incorporated into a more conventional, more humdrum pattern, one more attuned to a real world—and to real boys.

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After 1919 the possibility of the Play School Republic coming into existence became more and more remote, the necessary millionaire to finance it seemed less and less likely to materialize. Cook was disappointed; he wanted the whole of his dream to become true.

He was also irritated by many of those who tried to copy his methods; they did not come up to his standards; what they produced seemed to be slipshod. I remember once sitting in his room when he was looking through some text-books, sent to him by a publisher, intended for teachers who wished to follow the Play Way method. Indignantly he read passages and some specimens of children's verse printed in one of the books. 'No standard,' he muttered, 'they don't understand,' and hurled the book on the floor.

Yet he would not do the obvious thing, put aside his big dream and concentrate on the immediate, possible task of pressing forward the Play Way as the most effective way of teaching English, at any rate at the pre-adolescent and early adolescent stage. He might possibly have extended his experiments. The only piece of group play making he did after 1920 was *The Fight at Finnesburg*.<sup>1</sup> Though carried out with boys rather older than those who had made *The Death of Baldr*, it broke no new ground; indeed it was a partial failure, not because it was not a very good boys' play, or because those who made it learnt much from and gained much enjoyment in its making, but because it was too closely moulded on what he had done previously. He was fortunate in working in a school eminently sympathetic to his beliefs; his ideas had already taken root outside its walls. What was necessary was to deepen the roots, to explain, adapt, revise, to show how the Play Way was workable in schools which, while animated by a spirit different from the old, were still run, to a great extent, on con-

<sup>1</sup> Of the original plays performed by the Perse Players after 1920 I was responsible for five, *The Duke and the Charcoalburner*, *The Death of Roland*, *The Ford of Thorn*, *Jane in Search of a Husband*, and *The Firstborn*: Leonard Amey, under Cook's inspiration, wrote *The Knight and the Squire*, while *Helen of Troy*, by John Spry, though produced by Cook, sprang from influences which had their origins in his work but had gone beyond him.

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ventional patterns. Several times I urged him to do this. But he would not. After the publication of *The Play Way* he wrote little more.

It is incredible how much Cook accomplished in a short space of time. While to the end he remained a great teacher, his supremely original work was confined to a few years. The first *Perse Play Book* was published in 1912, the second and third in 1913, the fourth in 1914, the fifth in 1915. *The Play Way* was completed in 1915 and published in 1917.

Caldwell Cook died in 1937. How shall we appraise him? He was fortunate in serving under one who, though he would be the last to acknowledge it, was endowed with a greater genius and a deeper vision than his, Dr. W. H. D. Rouse, Headmaster of the Perse School Cambridge. Rouse set the stage on which Cook was enabled to work. Cook's genius was a limited one. In his own sphere he was truly brilliant. He was not, however, a profound educationalist in the widest sense; he never saw the educational process as a whole. I do not think that, even if he had been given the chance he wanted, he would have made a very good headmaster; his sympathies were too restricted. In saying this I am not in any way belittling his genius. I am merely trying to state the facts truly.

His flair was the small boy, whom he thoroughly understood. Once the boy had passed into the stage of adolescence Cook ceased to have much interest in him. He did not understand the adolescent mind.

There was something of a Peter Pan quality about him; one felt that Cook had never really grown up. That quality lay at the root of his success with the small boy; it was definitely a handicap later. Nor was his range of vision wide. His primary contribution to education was in the domain of the teaching of English to what he called the Littleman. To that end he invented the Play Way.

It is necessary that one should be clear what the Play Way was. It is a vivid, but to some extent misleading, phrase. Cook's deep insight into boy psychology saw that the boy was naturally active, creative, animated by a desire to do and make

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things, that he was not merely a young savage interested only in games and ragging, but a lover of beauty and capable, in his own youthful medium, which was not the medium of the adult, of creating beautiful things. Much of this, of course, is now accepted and acted upon. But it fell to Cook, at a time when repression rather than free activity permeated educational practice, not only to state this truth in vigorous terms, but also, in his own sphere, to give it practical expression. He brought the spontaneity and energy of play into the classroom.

But to say that work must approximate to play may be a half-truth. It must be balanced by the dictum, 'Non palma sine pulvere'. Cook fully realized this. What he meant by play he made quite clear in the first chapter of *The Play Way*:

'It is the core of my faith that the only work worth doing is really play; for by play I mean doing anything with one's heart in it.'

'To do anything with interest, to get at the heart of the matter and there live active—that is Play.'

'The Play Way is an endeavour to achieve right conduct in a true blend of the functioning of all man's powers.'

'Play, as I mean it, goes far deeper than study; it passes beyond reasoning, and, lighting up the chambers of the imagination, quickens the body of thought, and proves all things in action.'

'By Play I mean the *doing* anything one *knows* with one's heart in it.'

'It is a principle of the Play Way that the finest conceptions of the mind are not lessened in value, but enhanced, by being put into use, brought into play. This form of play is not in any sense a diversion. It is an active expression of what one feels.'

'When I wish to help little boys to see the might and beauty of poetry, I do not discourse upon poetics. As a playmaster I know it is more practical to start the whole miracle with the word, "Make".'<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, the impression was created that the Play Way

<sup>1</sup> *The Play Way*. Chapter I, 'General Principles of the Play Way'. (Heinemann.)

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road was an easy road for teacher and pupil alike. True, it was a pleasant one for both. But it involved the pupil's putting the same energy into 'work' that he was prepared to put into 'play', and the teacher's working and thinking much harder than he might otherwise have done.

Cook accomplished much. He created a revolution in his own lifetime, and in hidden ways his influence lives. But he might have accomplished more if he had followed that first exciting, exuberant statement of theory and practice which filled the years 1911 to 1915 with something more balanced and less exuberant.<sup>1</sup>

It would not have been a very difficult task. Cook's touch was sure from the first; he made few false starts.

Littleman lectures,<sup>2</sup> with their particular and essential ritual, as described in *The Play Way*, continued to be an effective instrument for teaching the small boy to speak easily and without self-consciousness. It was also possible to adapt this sort of oral teaching to the needs of older boys with very satisfactory results.<sup>3</sup>

'Stick wagging'<sup>4</sup> proved to be a subtle means not only of giving a boy a feel for verse rhythm but also of training verbal memory. It is an excellent basis for verse writing and the great volume of excellent verse produced by Perse boys through their school careers was, I believe, to some extent due to this form of

<sup>1</sup> In the Preface to *The Play Way* he apologized for writing the book in so great a hurry. He completed it just before he joined the Army and actually corrected the proofs in France. He promised a 'fuller and more reasoned discourse' at 'a more quiet time'. But it was never written.

<sup>2</sup> Littleman lectures were invented by Cook as a result of his watching small boys let loose in the playground spontaneously making stump speeches. In a lesson devoted to Littleman lectures boys make speeches on anything they wish. Normally they are prepared beforehand. The class is conducted by a boy *mister* (or chairman) and the lectures are marked by the boys themselves by a show of hands. The master keeps very much in the background.

<sup>3</sup> *vide my The Approach to History*, Chapter V.

<sup>4</sup> Stick wagging is a method of group verse speaking. The verse to be spoken is learnt orally; the boys have no books. Each boy has a short stick with which he combines the beating of the rhythm of the verse spoken in chorus and the tracing in the air of patterns expressing its meaning. The fullest description is in the introduction to the fifth *Perse Play Book*.

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early training. It is, however, not an easy method for a teacher to learn to use flexibly and with full effect. But how much more effective it is than the wearisome learning of 'rep'. On one period a week, Cook could teach some thirty or so lyrics a term. The speed with which, without a book, a boy learnt was astounding to watch.

That the ordinary boy could write verse of peculiar beauty Cook proved conclusively, as anyone reading the *Perse Play Books* must agree. Further, this ability continued during the years of adolescence. I remember a fourth form to which I attempted to teach the rudiments of literary criticism. They persisted in regarding my efforts as rather a joke but, as homework, sent me in masses of really good verse. I am inclined to think, however, that to be able to bring out a boy's capacity to write verse, one must have the ability, which all teachers do not possess, to write verse oneself. After all, it is difficult to teach a boy to do something which one cannot do oneself.

The writing of a group play in blank verse is not difficult provided the teacher has patience to surmount the early difficulties and possesses himself some metrical and dramatic skill, so that he can direct, inspire and criticize competently. To write a group play takes time, however, and a sort of faith which many teachers lack. To do it successfully involves concentration on this particular task and a willingness to put aside for the time other forms of teaching. One must have learnt to believe that nothing very terrible is likely to happen if for a time there is no weekly grammar lesson and that the best and most effective teaching is often indirect.

What I find most surprising is that Cook's method of teaching Shakespeare has not been more universally adopted. His thesis was absurdly simple. Shakespeare wrote plays, not texts for classroom study. Most boys like to act. Therefore teach Shakespeare by acting his plays on a stage.

A critical study of *Hamlet* by a sixth form is a useful activity; unfortunately boys are forced to 'study' a play of Shakespeare in order to pass the School Certificate; but why, before then, one should 'study' Shakespeare, when one might simply



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enjoy him, I have never discovered. It is possible to get through at least six or seven plays of Shakespeare, say, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Julius Caesar*, *Richard II*, *Henry IV*, Part I, and *Macbeth*, before the School Certificate stage is reached, gaining in the process a good knowledge of plot and character, as well as a feel for Shakespearian blank verse and for the technique of the Elizabethan theatre, by acting the plays in simple costume as a part of normal classroom procedure, for one period or so a week. Not every word will be understood nor every allusion grasped; one is obliged to limit one's objective. The boy will have had, however, the best possible introduction to the prince of English dramatists; most will have acquired a real liking for Shakespeare, he will have become a part of them; and a sure foundation will have been laid for later study and enjoyment.

Littleman lectures, stick wagging and verse writing, the teaching of Shakespeare through acting, and play making, all have stood up to the test of time. The all-important teaching of prose writing Cook developed to a high art. He had an uncanny knowledge of the sort of theme on which a boy could write most effectively at any particular age and the prose he would gain most by reading.

Cook was not alone in advocating a new spirit in the school; he made his own unique contribution by demonstrating how, in one particular sphere, that spirit could be given practical expression in the work of the classroom; he showed how dreams could be made to come true. And that is one of the greatest of achievements.

Yet in how many schools, particularly in how many grammar schools—and his work was with the grammar school boy who might later become the university scholar—is what he discovered effectively used? *The Play Way* is still a book worthy of study. Much of the *Perse Play Books*,<sup>1</sup> long out of print, would be worth re-issuing.

Yet any who would adopt the Play Way as an instrument for the training of boys of from eleven to thirteen must learn from

<sup>1</sup> Originally published by Hefter and Sons (Cambridge).

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Cook something which was always present in his own practice but has not always been followed by would-be disciples.

First, there must be proper preparation by the teacher. The key to Cook's success lay, in part, in the very great care he gave to the preparation of the work of the following day. All the time I worked with him I never knew him enter a classroom unprepared. I do not think that the numerous visitors who came to watch his teaching ever fully realized how exquisitely spontaneity and direction were balanced.

Secondly, there must be insistence on standard. The Play Way is not a slack or easy way; it demands not less but more 'work' from the boy, not a lower but a higher attainment. This insistence on standard was another element in Cook's success. He was troubled by the lack of it of some of his followers.

Thirdly, Cook was one of the sternest disciplinarians I have ever known. Boys could do in his classes many things which most teachers would not allow, but in others he was extremely strict.<sup>1</sup> I remember more than once the Mummery (the name given to the miniature theatre), to the great inconvenience of those of his colleagues who also used it, being closed for a week and all acting banned because the marks of dirty boots had been left on the seats or some costumes had not been returned to their proper pegs in the 'tiring house'. There was noise in his lessons, a great deal of it, when there ought to be noise; but when quiet was necessary there was stillness and quiet attention.<sup>2</sup>

In Cook was found that rare combination, the dreamer and the craftsman. He saw in his vision a new sort of school, happier, more fertile of result, because more attuned to the best in the nature of the boy. Though I have now come to believe that his big dream was incomplete and too much in the clouds, it was founded on something fundamentally right; from it I drew my own first inspiration. But it is as the superb craftsman that his

<sup>1</sup> 'Under a natural system of education there can be no absolute standard of discipline. Right behaviour is a relative condition to be determined by its appropriateness to the occasion' Cook: *The Play Way*, Chap. II.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. D. A. Beacock, who has in *Play Way English for To-day* (Nelson) made a not always very accurate study of Cook and his work, seems to have missed these three important characteristics.

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claim to fame chiefly lies, the man who could not only dream dreams, but who could also make his dreams come true. Would there were more in our profession with his insight and originality, his capacity to combine discipline and freedom, spontaneity and direction, vision and skill.

## VII

### THE COMPLETION OF AN EXPERIMENT: THE ENGLISH SUBJECTS SYNTHESIS

**T**he experiment which will be described in this paper started over twenty-five years ago. I was then an assistant master at the Perse School, Cambridge, where Dr. W. H. D. Rouse had introduced the Direct Method in the teaching of the Classics and H. Caldwell Cook had invented the Play Way. It was under the influence of these two great educational pioneers that I set out to make my own particular contribution to the experimental work of that famous school, a theory and method of teaching history to the boy of school age. At the same time I shared, with H. Caldwell Cook, the teaching of English, and my first published book, *Two Plays from the Perse School*,<sup>1</sup> described the results of an extension of Cook's experiments in play-making by boys into a field, that of the adolescent, which he had not touched.

The results of my experiments in the teaching of history, which covered some eight years, were recorded in a pamphlet, issued by the Historical Association in 1927, called *The Study of History in Schools as a Training in the Art of Thought*, and in a book, *The Approach to History*,<sup>2</sup> which was published in 1928.

I did not appreciate at the time to what end this early series of experiment would lead. I see now that what I shall describe in the following pages was implicit in this beginning. For I had already accepted the fact that, as a teacher of history to these youngsters, I was not primarily concerned with history, which, in its proper sense, cannot be studied at this age, but, through these history lessons, with the training of the boy in a number of essential skills.

<sup>1</sup> Heffer of Cambridge, 1921.

<sup>2</sup> Christophers.

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This was made quite clear in the titles of the chapters of my book, *The Approach to History*: 'The Map of History and its Making' (concerned with the *visual* expression of the material studied); 'The Imaginative Conception of History and its Expression'; 'First Lessons in Collection and Arrangement'; 'Expression, Written and Oral'; 'Further Lessons in Collection and Arrangement'. What I there described was a method of training in what I have now come to call *English skills*, using historical material as my particular medium.

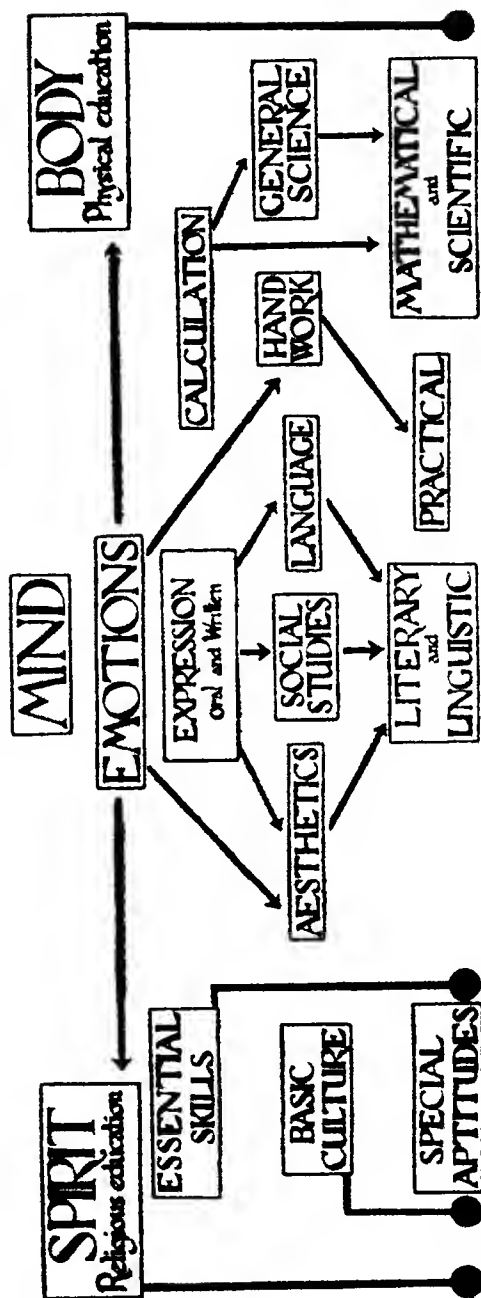
In 1928 I became headmaster of Bishop Wordsworth's School, Salisbury. The problems I had to solve were wider ones; as a headmaster I was concerned with the balancing and organization of the whole curriculum. Gradually I reached a number of obvious conclusions, conclusions which many others beside myself had reached; that the curriculum was overloaded; that there was much overlapping between subjects, different teachers doing very much the same thing through different media; that much of the material used was irrelevant and out of date, retained only through habit and inertia; that, by a method which I called that of *addition in isolation*, new subjects had been added without any regard to their educational function in relation to those already there. I became convinced that the curriculum was in urgent need of reconstruction. Merely to tinker with what already existed was useless; it was necessary to think out the whole structure afresh.

It would be tedious to describe in detail the plan of curriculum reconstruction I eventually reached. A preliminary sketch of it was given in a lecture at an international educational conference at Nice in 1932; the plan was described in full in a book, *Citizens in the Making*,<sup>1</sup> which was published in 1936.

What, in my thinking, I attempted to do was to break away from the old subject divisions and to analyse the curriculum afresh in terms of what I labelled *elements*, each element having some particular function. The diagram on page 67 will make the general conception sufficiently clear to the reader. This analysis enabled me to view the curriculum in a new way, to

<sup>1</sup> Published by Christophers.

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think of it more clearly in relation to what each part of it was trying to do. Elements, I saw, could be combined in any way one wished or as circumstance dictated; one was not bound to the old subject divisions unless they still proved useful. It will be noticed that *Expression* is shown as an element which runs through the whole, while the old subject names, 'English', 'history' and 'geography', have disappeared and been replaced by two elements, *Aesthetics* and *Social Studies*, which, with *Expression*, describe the function they had, in part, fulfilled.

My task was to translate this mode of thinking into practice. I am not, however, here concerned with the whole curriculum. The experiment which is described is confined to the translation into practical form of the elements, *Expression*, *Aesthetics* and *Social Studies*, at the stage of *Basic Culture*.

I was forced to proceed cautiously, with due regard to the teachers and other means available. In the early years of my headmastership the techniques I had described in *The Approach to History* were applied to the teaching of that subject. In that task I had the invaluable help of a young history master, H. C. Oram. The next stage was to test out the possibilities of history and geography as one composite subject. A combination of English history and English literature was also tried out on a small scale. The symbols HG and HE appeared on the time-table.

During the 1930's the introduction of some instruction in 'Civics' and 'Current Affairs' became increasingly advocated. In many schools this need was met by the old method of *addition in isolation*, by the adding of yet another subject to an already overfull curriculum. We worked in another way. We started by ruthlessly pruning away much of the material of the normal school history course and replaced, during the third school year, what had been eliminated by a course in what we called *Social Studies*, a mixture of elementary economics and politics, modern history and geography, with a little simple sociology.<sup>1</sup> On the time-table appeared the symbol, SS.

<sup>1</sup> After being tested out for several years in actual class teaching, I wrote up the essential material in *This Modern Age* (Christophers).

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This may seem very piecemeal procedure. It was necessarily so; we were feeling our way. Moreover, the speed and scope of our experiment was conditioned by the teachers available to carry it out and also, of equal, even greater importance, by a regard for the best interests of the boys. Schoolmasters are not justified in making a boy or girl the *corpus vile* of doctrinaire experimentation; that must be left to the cranks and the politicians.

This comparatively slow pace was, however, in the end, an advantage; each section of the course was tested thoroughly; the best teaching methods at each stage worked out in detail; the effects of teaching in this way at the stage of Basic Culture on progress and achievement at the stage of studies according to special aptitude determined. For instance, we discovered that it was possible to discard most of the history normally taught in schools and yet, at the School Certificate stage, in a good year, to send in 50 candidates for history and get 29 distinctions (A marks), 19 credits and 2 passes.<sup>1</sup> Boys, trained in this way in their early years, gained easily scholarships in History and English at Oxford and Cambridge.

Only occasionally before 1939 had it been possible to try out the full SSE or HGE combination; during the war years the most we could do was to prevent the whole experiment collapsing. The team who had worked at it was broken up. Teachers constantly changed and were sometimes of poor calibre. The general pattern was, however, somehow kept intact and, in September 1945, we were in a position to launch out on the final stage of the experiment. In September 1946 we had put into full operation, in all parts of the school below that in which the School Certificate is taken, what we called the *Social Studies synthesis*.

The thesis of this Social Studies synthesis may be put briefly. It was that, at the stage of Basic Culture, the normal subject

<sup>1</sup> The function of the School Certificate is, of course, to test something which approximates much more to what I call basic culture than studies according to special aptitude. We have, however, for many years, allowed the maximum freedom of choice of subjects offered in the examination.



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divisions of English, history and geography, taught by different specialist teachers, are not only undesirable, illogical and uneconomic in time and energy, but also unnecessary. At this stage these subjects, together with elementary economics and politics (so called civics and current affairs) should be envisaged as one 'subject' and taught, to any particular group, by the same teacher.

The phrase, 'Social Studies synthesis', sprang from the earlier stages of the experiment, when we used the phrase, 'Social Studies', to describe any history-geography-economics-politics combination we felt it desirable to make. It was not, however, a good description of what we were now trying to do and was likely to cause confusion if retained. For a while we called the synthesis, *Skills, Heritage and Environment*, abbreviated to SHE. This proved too cumbersome and eventually we decided that the most accurate title was the *English subjects synthesis* or, if you like, simply the *English synthesis*.

It is essential that the fundamental basis should be appreciated from the first. Unless it is fully understood, the would-be teacher will find it difficult to make the synthesis work in the classroom. At a certain stage in the experiment difficulties arose which compelled us to try to find the co-ordinating factor which could bind the whole together. It took us some time to do this, though it proved to be very simple and was actually obvious at the initial stages of the experiment. Any idea of 'correlating' English, history and geography in the conventional way we found we had to put aside; it contained too many practical difficulties. We had to ask ourselves what was the task common alike to the teacher of English, of history, and of geography. We found this to be the inculcation of certain *English skills*, such as the ability to express oneself orally and in writing, the ability to collect material of different sorts and to express what has been collected in various forms (this includes, but is not confined to, the use of books as a means of acquiring knowledge), the capacity to think with reasonable precision. This gave us the basic conception, the co-ordinating factor, which must direct both the framing of the curriculum and the way it is arranged

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and taught. The foundation of the English subjects synthesis, round which everything else revolves, is training in English skills.

To make these English skills the foundation of the synthesis does not involve a neglect of the aesthetic and imaginative aspects of the work. Their importance cannot be exaggerated. There is, however, no more fertile way of arousing the imagination than a creative training in skills. One of the best ways to learn to appreciate good prose is to try to write good prose oneself.

In this training in English skills we found any suitable material could be used, literary, historical, geographical, economic, political; some material is most useful for one purpose, some for another. So, in the process of inculcating these English skills, we can use a mass of carefully chosen material which becomes the substance of our literary and Social Studies courses.

In the selection of this material we need not feel ourselves bound to the conventional history and geography curriculum patterns. What the boy is most interested in is the world in which he lives, that is, in his *environment*. He cannot, however, understand this environment properly except in relation to its origins; he has a past as well as a present, a *heritage* as well as an environment. The desire to give the boy a picture of his environment in relation to his heritage thus dictates the factual historical, geographical, economic and political material we use. Indeed, to speak of a course in *Heritage and Environment* possibly gives a clearer description of what we are trying to do than if we use the term, Social Studies. The phrase embraces literature, which is part of our heritage, in a way which Social Studies does not.

Within the general agreed pattern the English subjects teacher has wide scope for initiative and variety of material and method. He must know what, at each stage, are the English skills he is expected to teach. He has at his disposal a number of techniques, tried out in practice and found effective, which he can use; he can invent others for himself. He has a basis on which he can decide on the most appropriate literary, historical,

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geographical, economic and political material for the carrying out of his task. He has under his control the whole of the 'English' work of any particular group, which, under a normal grammar school time-table, he will see for some ten periods a week. While it is necessary to co-ordinate the work of an English subjects team, how he fits it all together is a matter which can to a large degree be left, with such help as the extent of his experience may make necessary, to his own judgment and skill.

The course has been arranged in three stages, covering the years of approximately eleven plus to fourteen plus. The more talented grammar schoolboy can complete it in three years; the less talented takes four. In the modern school four or five years would be appropriate.

The English skills which should be taught at each stage have been carefully drawn up and, since they are the basis of the synthesis, it will be useful to set them down in some detail.

### STAGE I.

#### 1. *Oral work.*

Chiefly through 'speeches'. Small boys talk for short periods on anything that interests them. Speeches are normally prepared beforehand, but extemporary speeches are allowed. A 'speeches' lesson has its special ritual; it can go on without a teacher being present.

#### 2. *Prose reading and recapitulation of matter read.*

Some reading aloud to teach the art of reading but a good deal of quiet reading—all need not have the same book—followed by recapitulation—telling of stories and such-like.

#### 3. *Verse reading and speaking and learning of verse.*

The most effective method is through group speaking, which gives a sense of rhythm and enables a large amount of verse to be learnt in a short time.

#### 4. *Verse and Prose writing.*

Verse writing confined to simple ballad and lyric metres; prose writing to free composition on themes of the boy's own choice, with careful attention to spelling, punctuation, correct

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sentences, and, but not overdone at this stage, paragraphing.

### 5. *Collection and expression of material.*

Through the 'Record Chart method', used in the heritage and environment course. Each topic studied is expressed in visual form.

### 6. *Grammar.*

Some formal grammar is necessary but should not be overdone and is best treated, as far as possible, incidentally through prose composition.

## STAGE 2.

### 1. *Oral work.*

More carefully prepared lectures on historical and geographical themes, particularly on local and social history.

### 2. *Prose writing.*

Still mainly descriptive, but a beginning made with more difficult forms; linked up with prose reading; simple literary models used. Training in paragraphing and more elaborate forms of sentence construction.

### 3. *Verse reading and writing.*

Continuation of Stage 1, with inclusion of reading and writing of blank verse. Verse writing linked up with the imaginative conception of history and geography. Play-making in blank verse can be attempted if conditions are favourable.

### 4. *Collection and expression of material and use of books.*

The 'skeleton note book' method used, under which the boy is given a number of headings which will guide him in collecting from his text-books the essential facts of his heritage and environment course. Training in the use of a library as a source of material for the compilation of development and other forms of chart, individually or in small groups.

### 5. *Grammar.*

Again as may be considered necessary, but not overdone. Word study introduced and training in use of dictionaries.

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### STAGE 3.

#### 1. *Elementary literary criticism.*

(a) How the poet gets his effects: rhythm and rhyme: pattern, sound and sense: pictures: figures of speech, etc.

(b) Various verse forms: ode; sonnet; Shakespearian and Miltonic blank verse; rhymed couplet.

(c) Verse writing in particular forms: sonnet, rhymed couplet, etc.

#### 2. *Prose writing associated with prose study.*

Narrative, description, exposition, persuasion, including the writing of a letter and writing for a particular object. Simple study of pure essay form.

#### 3. *Use of books and material.*

Collection of material for writing of an article or short treatise on a chosen subject; collection of material for note-books, charts, or diagrams; collection of material and delivery of a lecture with epidiascope illustrations, etc. Group surveys can be carried out at this stage, if desired.

#### 4. *Recapitulation and extracting the essential out of what has been read.*

A skill essential for further progress which, without being laboured or dull, must be given careful attention at this stage.

The historical, geographical, economic and political material used at each of these three stages is determined by the Heritage and Environment theme of that stage. Our theme at Stage 1 is world heritage and environment, and a course of world history and geography is incorporated. At Stage 2 our national heritage and environment is dealt with. At Stage 3 is surveyed the conditions of our own age, with some reference to origins. It includes a study of how the work of the world is carried on (economics), how men, particularly in our own country, are governed (politics), how the conditions of our day have come about (history and geography), as well as such topics of social interest as the press, the cinema, radio, town and country planning and such-like.

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Though co-ordination in the work of the team is needful, it is undesirable to lay down a too rigid scheme of literary study. Some of the great stories of the world should be read at Stage 1 and some literature illuminating national character and history at Stage 2.<sup>1</sup> Some of the literature to be studied will be chosen to fit in with the teaching of English skills. It is assumed, however, that a master realizes that the aesthetic side of the English subjects synthesis is of supreme importance, that the rousing of a love of fine literature is one of his main tasks. As all the best practitioners of the teaching of English literature have known, one of the best ways of encouraging a love of and taste for literature is through the effort to create for oneself. As Caldwell Cook once wrote: 'When I want little boys to see the might and beauty of poetry, I do not discourse upon poetics . . . I know it is more practical to start the whole miracle by the one word, "Make".'<sup>2</sup> The capable master may rightly be left as much as possible to his own devices. Far more can usually be gained through the sympathetic reading aloud by the master of the things he himself loves than by dull hours devoted to the formal study of a laid down text.

We consider, further, that every boy should have a reasonably extensive knowledge of Shakespeare. So that all boys may, by the end of the stage of Basic Culture, have acted (note the word) a suitable collection of his plays, a Shakespearian syllabus has been drawn up, which all are called upon to follow:

*Stage 1:* Acting of ballads and selected scenes from Shakespeare, followed by *Midsummer Night's Dream*.

*Stage 2:* *Twelfth Night*, *Julius Caesar*, *Merchant of Venice*.

*Stage 3:* *Richard II* or *Hamlet* (abridged), *Macbeth*, *Henry IV*, Part I.

When three years are given to the course, each play occupies a term, after the preliminary period of acted ballads and separate scenes. All the plays are acted on a stage, with simple costumes and properties. Shakespeare wrote plays to be acted, not

<sup>1</sup> It is possible to build up this course in our national heritage and environment to a great extent round literature.

<sup>2</sup> In *The Play Way*, Chap. I.

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to be studied; and to 'study' Shakespeare, seated in desks, at this stage, is a foolish and ineffective practice.

The advantages of entrusting the teaching of the whole of the English subjects synthesis in any particular group to the same teacher has probably, by now, become obvious. It may, however, be made clearer by a few examples.

The necessity of a boy's learning to express himself precisely and in an interesting manner through the spoken word needs little stressing. At the first stage the object will be to enable him to overcome his nervousness and to speak clearly without hesitation. So he is called upon to talk about anything he likes. While one may demand that the matter should be interesting to his hearers, it is not important; training in style is the prime consideration. At the next stage, however, that the boy should learn to prepare his material becomes imperative, and history and geography offer the most suitable field from which he may choose his topics. For his lecture on the local Roman earthworks or the medieval cathedral, on the voyages of the Elizabethan seamen or the evolution of the sailing ship, or whatever his topic may be, the boy is obliged to collect facts carefully, to arrange them in the proper sequence and to prepare illustrative material, if he is to give a good lecture. At the next stage he can draw on a different sort of material. He is studying our own age and may elect to lecture on the details of some industrial process, such as the making of gas, the mining of coal or the scientific basis and use of plastics. Here both the collection of his factual material and its arrangements, so that a clear, interesting lecture may be given, will present greater difficulties. Or he may decide to speak on the use and abuse of the cinema or on the Press or on the intricacies of town planning. Here again his task is more difficult than in the oral work he did at the second stage. Thus, in a graded course of oral expression, training in English skills and the course in Heritage and Environment are effectively intermingled.

This is equally true in the teaching of prose composition. At the first stage training through free composition on themes within the young boy's capacity, to a great extent chosen by

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himself, is the most effective. In the teaching of world heritage and environment, written expression need not be employed; one can confine oneself to the more psychologically sound method of visual expression through record and time chart. By the combination of the two media the English subjects teacher is able to give a more effective training in the art of expression than could otherwise be given.

At the next stage the boy is ready to go on to a harder, though still comparatively simple, form of expression, the verbal expression of the material which he collects and records in his Heritage and Environment 'skeleton heading' notebook, and the simple 'essay' of a literary type or on historical or geographical themes for which factual material has been collected. When, as he does at this stage, he starts to handle more elaborate material, as, for instance, when he is set to collect his facts from a library in order to make a development chart, he is allowed again to use the, for him, easier visual and diagrammatic form of expression instead of continuous prose.

Thus, when he enters the third stage, he has gradually been prepared to use written words for a number of different purposes and is ready to proceed further, to write in the pure essay form, for instance, or to draft an article, or to compose a short thesis.

Finally, what is true of oral training and of training in the collection of material and the writing of prose, is also true of the teaching of verse writing. At the first stage what the teacher tries to do is to convince the boy that he can, if he tries, write verse—and most can—and to give him simple rules and a sense of rhythm. The rest can be left to his natural creativeness. During the next stages he is able to build up on this foundation, increasing in power, breadth and skill. Experiment has proved that, given the acquisition of adequate skill at the first stage, the boy can use verse to bring out the, all-important at this age, imaginative aspects of history and geography far better than if he used prose.

It is improbable that I have described any technique that is not already used by the good history, the good English, or the



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good geography teacher. But with what an amount of overlapping, with what waste of time and energy! The more vigorous, the more enlightened the group of teachers, the greater is the strain on the boy. Poor youngster! The English master demands an 'essay', the history master demands an 'essay', the geography master demands an 'essay'; three essays when, from the point of view of the boy's real education, one would have been sufficient. The English master wants verses; the history master wants verses; two sets of verses, possibly mediocre, when one good set might have been written. I am, of course, not prepared to say that, at the end of the stage of Basic Culture, in a school where the English subjects synthesis has been adopted, every boy will be able to speak and write well, still less that he will be able to compose tolerable verse. I am prepared to say, however, that there is a much greater chance that he will be able to do so, and with much less labour for teacher and pupil.

Essentially the English subjects synthesis is a means of attaining that ideal to which so much lip service is given, but about which so little is, in practice, done, that English should be the basis of the curriculum. It is attained by the only effective method, that of devising a synthesis in which all the 'English' elements of the curriculum are combined and treated as a unity, with English skills as its foundation. In this synthesis literature occupies the first place; history and geography, economics and politics, are given their rightful value. None of these latter, as they are conceived of by the adult mind, are suitable studies at this boyhood stage; the young mind is not yet mature enough nor has the boy had enough experience of life. In the English subjects synthesis they play a valuable part in a form which is psychologically and educationally sound.

The function of the English subjects master is similar to that of the old classical master in the junior and middle school. His subject is the basic subject of the curriculum and he teaches the same group a sufficient number of times each week to get to know them as human beings. The English subjects synthesis offers a solution to the problem of the lost form master more

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logical and practically effective than that suggested in the Norwood Report.

Under conditions as they are, the introduction of an English subjects synthesis into a school is not too easy. A fresh attitude and approach by the teacher is demanded; the old prejudices and conventions of the specialist must be laid aside; though on a very elemental level, he may possibly at first have to study unfamiliar branches of knowledge.

In the preparation of the teacher the particular studies undertaken at the university do not seem to matter very much. That they should be somewhat wider than they sometimes now are would probably be an advantage; but nothing in our experience has led me to favour a general degree as the best form of preparation for the English subjects teacher.

While this experiment has convinced me that the English subjects synthesis is right at the stage of Basic Culture, I am equally convinced that a too generalized education should not be continued too long, that the boy only begins to discover his full powers when he enters on the stage of what I prefer to call 'studies according to special aptitude', rather than specialization; that is, when he is allowed to concentrate more on those studies for which he has a particular flair. The school will continue to need specialists, men and women with wide and profound knowledge of English literature, history and geography; this can only be ensured if the studies of the potential English subjects teacher at the university are of honours standard. But these specialists will require to be more than specialists, more balanced and with a wider range of interests and knowledge.

In practice history and English specialists have proved equally capable of teaching English subjects synthesis; geography specialists tend, perhaps, to be more limited in their outlook and to possess less of that literary skill and aesthetic feeling which is desirable; but this need not be necessarily so.

The university should not, however, be regarded as an educational factory where a teacher is factually equipped for his work. Rather it is a place where, for three years, he can enjoy the de-

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lights of learning and acquire a true and lasting culture. The factual material he needs for his work as a teacher he can easily, if he has the will, acquire when he comes down. I regard my own years at the university as some of the most fertile years of my life; I have, however, used little of the historical knowledge I acquired at Cambridge, either in my writing or in my teaching.

The English subjects synthesis, cannot, moreover, be introduced into a school by one enthusiastic and convinced master. It involves the sort of team work which can only be organized by the head of the school or someone definitely entrusted by him with the task. Scattered up and down the schools of England there are many who would wish to break away from the old specialist teaching and work on the lines described in this essay. Until, however, the headmaster or headmistress is convinced of its desirability and is prepared to carry out the necessary task of organization and co-ordination, little that is effective can be done.

I have called this essay, 'The Completion of an Experiment'. In adopting that title I do not mean to indicate that there is nothing more to be done or that, if a visitor came to the school which, as headmaster, I serve, he would find everything finished or the school staffed by a group of expert practitioners with nothing to learn. I am, however, prepared to maintain that the thesis which I have put forward has been experimentally proved, that a valid basis and pattern has been evolved, and that a large number of teaching techniques have been tested and found effective.

Teaching is an art, or, if you will, a craft, which each fresh would-be practitioner must learn for himself. The new teacher, though the general lines of an English subjects synthesis have been mapped out for him, must learn, by his own classroom experience, to teach it with effect; and what he has to learn is considerable. A good English subjects teacher is not made in a day.

There is much work, also, to be done in determining different types of English skills suitable for different types of children.

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Our work has been done with boys of comparatively high intelligence, the majority of whom are capable of passing on to the Sixth Form of a grammar school. While we have made very considerable use of visual and manual forms of expression, especially at the early stages, there has been a natural tendency to give a literary connotation to the words, 'English skills'. If they are to be regarded as expressing the co-ordinating factor of an English subjects synthesis in all types of schools, they must be given a wider interpretation. Some children are incapable of anything but the most elementary form of literary expression; they will always think with their hands, in picture and form rather than in words; their natural medium of expression is visual and manual. In the teaching of such children—many will be found in the modern school—the 'English skills' must be envisaged in ways somewhat different from the way I have tended to describe them in this paper. While it is true that some work in this direction has been already done, there is still a wide field for experiment in suitable environments.

Some exploration of the sort of building and equipment needed for the efficient carrying out of English subjects work has been included in our experiment. It is clear to us that the English subjects classroom should be regarded and equipped as a laboratory, rather than as a conventional form room. The proper organization of an English subjects synthesis appears to demand, if possible, a group of adjacent rooms, allotted primarily to and equipped for the teaching of English subjects, with, if it can be secured, a small central library and equipment room. There is scope for a good deal of experiment, designed to find out the most suitable material environment for this type of work, experiment particularly important at the present time, when the building and equipping of so many new schools are projected.

The English subjects synthesis is capable of numerous modifications to suit different environments. While it is necessary that the fundamental conception and basis should, in practice, be accepted, each school will determine what it considers essential English skills—they need not be the same as those I have listed

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—the most suitable material for its heritage and environment course, and the teaching techniques most effective for itself. Further, while it is an essential feature of the English subjects synthesis that the whole of the work of any particular group should be entrusted to one master, here again certain modifications may sometimes be necessary. For instance, it is not everyone who is able to teach verse writing or play-making or to take a class in acting Shakespeare on a stage.

We are living at a time when, in all types of schools, curriculum reconstruction is being considered. The removal of the controls which the School Certificate Examination imposed gives an opportunity for modification, without loss of standard or quality, in the curriculum of the grammar school. The right curriculum of the modern school has not yet been determined; to make mistakes in pattern at this initial stage will prejudice progress in the future. The experiment I have described, based, as it is, on hard thinking and practical experience over a considerable number of years, provides, I believe, at least an indication of how, in one all-important branch of curriculum reconstruction, a useful advance may be made.

## VIII

### THE EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF BOYS<sup>1</sup>

I make no claim to be a trained psychologist. Such knowledge as I possess is empirical, gained from observation of the development and reaction of boys during some twenty years as a schoolmaster. Yet what a practising schoolmaster may say may be of some value; for, if he has a modicum of wisdom and observation and an interest in boys as boys and not merely as receptacles into which arbitrarily chosen gobbets of knowledge may be poured, he cannot help having learnt something of how they respond to different sorts of stimuli and how they tend to develop emotionally under various conditions.

While considerable lip service is given to the need of providing the right environment in which the emotional nature of boys may develop, it is doubtful whether in practice most schools really consider this a matter worthy of serious attention. Much is heard about the relative claims of training character and intellect; during the last decade much has been heard about physical education; the need of relating all these to emotional development, so as to produce a balanced and harmonious personality, has been given less consideration. Yet it is on the balanced, harmonious development of the emotional side of his nature that the future happiness of the boy most depends.

I was fortunate in serving my apprenticeship as a schoolmaster in a school in which the need of giving proper outlets to the emotional and creative urges of the growing boy was much more fully recognized than in most schools at that time. I was thus able, early in my career, to observe the effects of the acceptance of certain ideals, and of the techniques in which those

<sup>1</sup> An article which first appeared in the *Journal of Education*, June 1944.

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ideals were expressed, on the development of boys of different types, and to form useful conclusions on what constituted the most desirable educational practice.

How far a school provides an environment in which boys can develop harmoniously the emotional side of their natures depends on two things, on the spirit of the school, expressed in those studies and activities through which creative and emotional urges can best be given expression, and, of equal importance, on the value and prestige given to those studies and activities. It is not sufficient merely to provide the proper creative and emotional outlets; they must be given an honourable place in relation to other activities, not only by those in authority but also by the boys themselves. In those schools where the chief aim is materialistic success in public examinations, or where undue prominence is given to games, the emotional development of many boys may be hindered; for not only will the possible outlets be limited, but also the artist, the craftsman or the musician may not feel himself in full harmony with his environment—indeed he may be perhaps in rebellion against it—and so not obtain that complete emotional satisfaction which he might otherwise have got.

That is not to say that intellectual activities are not important, that physical prowess is not something after which one may rightly strive. On the contrary, for some boys it is through intellectual pursuits carried on to the cultural plane, or through a realization of powers in the physical field, that emotional development may be materially helped.

Of themselves, however, they are incomplete. The Greeks were wise when they based education on music and gymnastics, that is on a balanced combination of the aesthetic and the physical.

The starting-point should, I believe, be to try to give every boy the possibility of what, for want of a better word, may be called *self-discovery*. By *self-discovery* I mean the realization by the boy that in certain directions he has a definite skill or power. For some this may come by the discovery of power in the academic sphere; but for many it can come only through the realization of physical prowess, manual or artistic skill, ability

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as a poet, an actor, or a musician. It may come through none of these, but merely by a boy's realizing that, in carrying out some small but essential task, he is a useful member of the school community.

It has been interesting to watch this process of what I have called *self-discovery* in operation. Sometimes it has had almost the character of conversion; there is a swift change of nature, a sudden alteration in attitude, a clearly noticeable brightening of the eyes. The anti-social boy begins to fit in; the boy considered academically 'dull' begins to produce work of a reasonable standard. What has happened is something very important. The boy has *found* himself and the whole of his life is affected. He is in quite a real sense *reborn*. Usually, however, the process is gradual, often imperceptible. It is characterized by the realization by the boy of skill in some particular field, resulting in a new confidence, which is usually transferred to other spheres. This process of *self-discovery* carries with it a feeling of emotional satisfaction, which brings with it a sense of harmony and well-being.

Let me describe one specific instance. Smith (that may or may not have been his real name) was a middle-schoolboy. He was a nuisance to everyone, disliked by and disliking all his masters, the enemy of authority. Shakespeare may be regarded either as a man who wrote plays to be acted on a stage, or as the compiler of convenient texts to be used by schools in what are called 'English Literature' lessons. Smith was fortunate in being at a school which regarded Shakespeare as a playwright and in which a Shakespeare lesson was an acting lesson. Moreover, it was the custom of the school to have occasional 'bun feasts', in which scenes from Shakespeare's plays, which were being acted in class, were produced in the miniature school theatre. The play was *King Lear* and one of the scenes chosen for production was that particularly moving one in which the old broken-down king is wakened by Cordelia. Smith was chosen to play Lear. He acted magnificently; indeed his performance was one of the most beautiful pieces of boy acting I have ever seen. A little thing, perhaps; but it made all the difference to Smith.



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He became a changed boy. Though he just missed winning a scholarship, he went up to the university and was chosen for the Colonial Civil Service. Before he sailed for the Gold Coast he told me that he attributed his success to the day on which he had played Lear.

Many more instances could be given, but to do so would be tedious. Certain conclusions emerge. If a school is to provide adequate means for boys to develop the emotional side of their natures, it must take as its ideal what Dr. L. P. Jacks calls 'the education of the whole man'. That means in practice that it must provide opportunities of expression for different types and for the different urges which constitute the boy's make-up. It means that its work and activities must have flexibility and variety, that its academic curriculum must be dynamic and real, that its system of physical education must be in the fullest sense an education in 'bodily-self management', that there must be the widest opportunities for the release of those creative urges which are present in most boys, and for the acquisition of artistic, musical, literary, dramatic, and manual skills. Moreover, it must be remembered that a boy is best educated and develops best emotionally, not through being compelled to do the things he cannot do, but by being encouraged to bring to the highest standard of perfection possible for him the things he can do. For it is thus that his skill-hunger is satisfied. While there is a body of basic culture necessary for all, it is when the boy can concentrate more fully on those studies for which he has a particular aptitude that one begins to see the full blossoming of his mind and personality. For some these studies will be of an academic character, for many they will be aesthetic or practical. Yet in how many schools is a boy who does not excel in mathematics or languages labelled as dull, in how many schools are music and crafts regarded as somehow of less worth than the more academic elements of the curriculum? The normal boy wants to make things, to do things, and to have full honour given to the things he makes and does. Even for the intellectual boy a greater balance between intellectual and manual activities is desirable.

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So, if a school is to provide a proper setting for the harmonious development of the emotional side of its members, it must seek an orientation of values, studies, and activities different from that now most common. It must give a wider choice of studies so as to meet the needs of different temperaments and types of ability. It must provide within those studies work which is creative and dynamic rather than passive and static. It must give to those elements which are concerned with aesthetic expression and skill acquisition a much greater honour. Only thus can it provide the opportunity to all for that *self-discovery*, which is the chief factor in ensuring balanced emotional growth.

What has been written above may possibly give the impression that all that is necessary to ensure balanced emotional development is unlimited opportunities for individual self-expression. That is not so. A school is a community and one of its chief objects must be to teach its members to live in community, to subordinate themselves to that community, to bow to its disciplines and conform to its customs. Moreover, the deepest emotional satisfaction can come only through the surrender of the selfhood, through the subordination of individual desire to that which is greater than the individual. The boy must learn that truth, known to saint and artist, that one can only save one's life by losing it. The wise school will, in order to ensure the best emotional development of its members, strive to strike a true balance between community living and individual growth and self-expression. It will strive, whenever possible, to link both together, so that what is done for the community is an expression of a creative urge, and the creative urge can find a communal expression. The great value of such communal activities as a big piece of constructional work—e.g. the building of a sports pavilion, or the production of a play, in both of which many varieties of talent and skill are needed—lies in the fact that individual creative urges are linked up with something the significance of which is fundamentally communal.



## SELECTION AND TESTING



## IX

### ADMISSION TO GRAMMAR SCHOOLS: THE CONDUCT OF A SELECTIVE EXAMINATION

**I**t is a not too difficult task to lay down general principles as to how a selective entrance examination should be conducted; it is much more difficult to put those principles into practice. For efficient practice involves the working out of valid techniques; these can only be evolved as the result of experience. A description, therefore, of the practical working of a selective entrance examination, which has proved to possess a reasonably high degree of validity, may be of some small value.

Its object is the selection of suitable boys for one grammar school; it is probable, however, that a similar procedure could be used, and would prove equally appropriate, if the object were to select pupils for admission to several schools.

All candidates are, at eleven plus, called upon to take a common written examination, set and marked by a Chief Examiner, appointed by the L.E.A. This written examination consists of an intelligence test and papers in English and arithmetic.

There are some who would wish to abolish tests in the skills of English and arithmetic. It is difficult to see, however, how, without some objective test of basic skills, one would have sufficient information to arrive at an adequate prognostication. Neither intelligence tests nor school records, either singly or combined, useful though they are, have as yet proved to be sufficiently reliable.

The I.Q. is doubled<sup>1</sup> and added to the marks gained in English and arithmetic, adjusted by the addition or subtraction of an age allowance, to enable the Chief Examiner to draw up

<sup>1</sup> A non-verbal group intelligence test, in addition to the verbal one, is now being tried out. Its value is not, however, established.

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the mark list for each grammar school in the county. This is a secret document; it is not regarded as in any way a final order of merit. For it is accepted as axiomatic that one cannot judge suitability for grammar school education on a consideration of general intelligence and academic ability alone.

The task of continuing the examination and of drawing up the final order of merit is entrusted to each grammar school. There are two reasons for this; the first is that, if schools are to be treated as individual entities, they must, under appropriate safeguards against abuse and within the limits of their function in the educational scheme, be entrusted with the choice of their own communities; the second is that the assessment of personal qualities and school records can only be adequately carried out through decentralization, it can never be an efficient mass process.

For the assessment of personal qualities the co-operation of the heads of the schools attended by the candidates is sought. Two forms are used, so designed that they are comparatively easy for the head of a primary school to fill in.

The first asks the head teacher to give two gradings, one for character, intelligence and promise, under the headings: Much above average, Above average, Average and Below average, the other for general suitability for admission to a grammar school under the headings: Outstanding, Special recommended, Recommended, Doubtful, Not recommended. He is also asked to put his candidates in order, taking all factors into consideration; it may not be the same order as that in which he would expect his candidates to appear in the written examination. Space is provided for a general report.

The second form, which is modelled on one used by the Air Training Corps, is concerned with the detailed assessment of personal qualities. It consists of six sets of four statements, laid out as follows:

### SENSITIVENESS TO THE INFLUENCE OF THE SCHOOL

Consider the degree to which he is responsive to the life and

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atmosphere of the school community and whether he is most influenced by its best or worst elements.

(a) Insensitive, little influenced by the school or only by its worst elements.

(b) Responsive to the life of the school but only to a small degree.

(c) Responsive to what is best in the school community and contributes to and is influenced by it.

(d) Not only highly responsive to but himself contributes much to the standards of the school.


Similar sets of statements are given under the headings, Keenness, Reliability, Leadership, Initiative, and Helpfulness and spirit of service. Opposite the statements referring to Keenness, Reliability and Initiative there are two columns, so that separate gradings may be given for the degree to which the quality is shown in the general sphere and in the sphere of the classroom respectively. All the teacher has to do is to put crosses in the squares opposite to the statements which describe the candidate best.

A large amount of information is now available about each candidate, which can be checked and added to by the oral examination, which is the next stage. It is transferred to charts as follows:

	Age	I.Q.	Marks	Order	Grade I	Grade II	K.1	K.2	R.1	R.2	L	I.1	I.2	H	S
Smith	11.7	129	585	1	MAA	O	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d	d
Jones	11.1	120	486	2	AA	SR	b	c	c	c	b	b	c	c	b
Brown	10.6	118	380	1	MAA	SR	d	c	d	c	c	d	c	d	d

An oral examination carried out with all this information available is very different from the ordinary type of interview



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and has marked prognosticating value. Consider the three actual examples cited above. Smith shows a complete correlation. I.Q. and marks are very high and grading and personal qualities all indicate that he is an eminently suitable candidate. The oral examination was very short, little more than a formality. Jones, in the middle group of the Chief Examiner's Order of Merit, on I.Q. and marks ought to get in, but his head teacher draws attention to defects in personal qualities which may adversely affect his school career. The oral examination confirmed the head teacher's judgment; it revealed him to be a rather spineless boy with little energy or drive. In the end he was rejected. Brown, on the other hand, though his I.Q. is reasonably high, scores low marks. On the written examination alone he would be turned down. But there is clearly more in him than the written examination has revealed. That was evident as soon as he presented himself for interview. By the time it was finished he had been put on the list of certain admissions.

The next stage is the most difficult, that of sifting all the evidence and drawing up the Final Order of Merit. Some candidates are clearly suitable; others clearly must be rejected; there remains what we call 'the pool', a fairly large group, some of whom may be accepted as suitable, others ought to be rejected. The claims of these candidates are worked over again and again, a long and careful process, to ensure absolute fairness; all doubtful cases are called up for a second oral examination before a Final Selection Board, on which a member of the Governing Body and a representative of the Education Office sit. This Selection Board passes the Final Order of Merit, on which admission is based, before it is issued.

Such in outline is the procedure used. There are, however, several other features which are worthy of mention.

(i) Before the Final Order of Merit is decided on, there are personal consultations with the heads of primary schools, who are told whom it is proposed to admit and invited to say whether they consider the choices right ones or not. The tentative admission list may be adjusted on the result of these consultations.

(ii) After a consideration of the Chief Examiner's Order of

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Merit and reports from the head teachers of schools a large number of those who took the written examination can be ruled out as obviously not up to standard and need not be called up for oral examination. Any head teacher can, however, ask for a candidate who has not been called up for oral examination to be interviewed, if he feels that he has claims to consideration. In one year two such candidates eventually secured admission.

(iii) Candidates may ask to be examined or present evidence of skill in such things as music, art and manual work, not tested in the written examination. Music appears to have a high prognosticating value. One boy, who might otherwise have been rejected, but was accepted on account of his marked musical talent, eventually become one of the finest Heads of the School.

Finally there is what may be called the 'audit', a check desirable and necessary in a decentralized examination, to ensure that schools act with scrupulous fairness. This may be ensured, if schools so will, by a representative of the Director of Education sitting on the Final Selection Board or by their being called upon by the Director of Education, acting on behalf of the County Education Committee, to whom a copy of the Final Order of Merit is sent, to defend the selection made and to give reasons why any particular candidate was accepted or rejected.

## X

### SURVEY OF A YEAR: A STUDY IN THE VALIDITY OF AN ENTRANCE EXAMINATION TO A GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Numerous books and articles have been written about the validity of entrance examinations—Valentine's *Validity of Examinations* is a good and valuable example—but most of them are, at any rate partially, unsatisfactory for the following, among other reasons:

1. They tend to treat human boys and girls as things instead of as living people. Their main object seems to be to get neat statistical tables or co-efficients of reliability.

2. Their tests of validity are too limited. For instance, position in an entrance examination is compared with position in the School Certificate Examination, a purely academic comparison of a very limited type. Whether an entrance test was valid or not cannot be assessed merely by considering a boy's academic career. One must take into account not only his intellectual development but also his physical and aesthetic development, the flowering of his personality and character and the part he played in the school community. Further, most surveys stop too early, at the School Certificate stage. The Sixth Form careers of boys give far more valuable information about them than their careers at an earlier age.

The survey described in the following pages was definitely an experiment. The method employed may be called that of the *case history*. An attempt was made to get a picture of each boy admitted in one particular year. It was not specially chosen; it happened to be the one from which the last remaining boys

## SURVEY OF A YEAR

were leaving school when it was decided to make a survey on these lines.

Before describing the method of inquiry adopted, something must be said about the particular entrance examination with which the inquiry deals.

All boys were admitted to the school under a 100 per cent Special Place System, that is, all were admitted on the basis of merit. Candidates for admission took a Common County Entrance Examination, set and marked by trained examiners, consisting of an intelligence test and two papers each in English and arithmetic. The total marks of each candidate were arrived at by adding the marks gained in the four papers to the I.Q., and adding or subtracting an age allowance. Candidates took the examination between the ages of  $10\frac{1}{2}$  and  $11\frac{1}{2}$  on 31st July of the year of the examination. Special permission was given for a few candidates between  $11\frac{1}{2}$  and  $12\frac{1}{2}$  to take the examination a second time.

The County Examiner's Order of Merit (which was regarded as confidential) was sent to the head of each grammar school concerned. It was arranged in four groups A, B, C, and D, the A group being regarded as definitely suitable, the B group as probably suitable, the C group as doubtful on the evidence of a written examination, the D group as unsuitable for secondary education.

It then fell to the head of each grammar school, using this first Order of Merit as a basis, but using also any other evidence he may have cared to collect, to frame the Final Order of Merit, on which admission was decided. Appropriate safeguards against the abuse of this freedom existed.

The other sources of evidence used were reports on all candidates from the heads of their previous schools, an oral examination, and, in the case of those candidates who wished to offer such evidence, evidence of special ability in such skills as music, art and craftsmanship.

Since the County Examiner's order was taken as a basis and only modified when other evidence appeared so to dictate, the Order of Merit printed below follows the order in which candi-

## SURVEY OF A YEAR

dates were placed by the County Examiner, but only contains the names of those boys who appeared in the Final Order of Merit and were actually admitted. It will be noted that the majority of the boys placed in Group A were given admission. Some of the upper part of the list fell out for various reasons unconnected with merit, such as the parent deciding to send his son to another school; some in the lower part of Group A were down-graded and did not secure admission. Factors other than those revealed in the written examination were allowed to operate to a much greater extent in choosing candidates from Group B. Only three candidates from Group C secured admission. So that it may be known where candidates were eliminated the actual position given to each candidate by the County Examiner is recorded.<sup>1</sup>

A few of the candidates included in the Order of Merit took a special examination, an examination of the same character as the main examination but held later and designed for those boys and girls who were prevented from taking the main examination on account of such things as sickness. These candidates have been placed in the Order of Merit according to their total marks and distinguished from the rest by an (S).

Each *case history* is made up as follows:

In the first column is shown, in Roman numerals, the order in the County Examiner's Order of Merit of the boys who were actually admitted. In the second column, in arabic numerals, is shown the actual position secured by each candidate in the County Examiner's Order of Merit. Next follows the age of the candidate on 31st July of the year of admission.

After the age of the candidate are three columns, which show I.Q., total marks gained and the grading of the head of the boy's previous school respectively. All the heads of schools were asked to give, in addition to a personal report, two gradings as follows:

(i) Much above average (M), above average (AA), average (A), below average (B).

<sup>1</sup> A detailed description of the selection procedure, though in a more developed form, is contained in the essay, 'Admission to Grammar Schools', included in this volume, pp. 91-95.

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(ii) Specially recommended (S), recommended (R), recommended with doubt (D), not recommended (N).

Then follows the boy's school record. For the purpose of the inquiry an attempt has been made to express this in symbols, picturing his achievement in the various activities of school life.

The first group of symbols deals with academic record; School Certificate, Higher Certificate, etc. For instance, SC<sub>4</sub> (IA & 3c) indicates that the School Certificate was passed at the end of four years and that one A mark and three credits were gained; fSC<sub>5</sub> indicates that the School Certificate was taken at the end of five years but that the candidate failed; HC<sub>6</sub> indicates that the boy was successful in the Higher Certificate after six years study.

It should be stated that undue importance is not attached to School Certificate results and there is no particular striving after credits or matriculation exemptions. Boys are put in for the examination as soon as possible, so as to be able to pass on quickly to Sixth Form work.

If the boy stayed on for Sixth Form work but did not take the Higher Certificate, this is indicated as follows: VI(1), i.e. stayed for Sixth Form work for one year.

Further academic distinctions, such as County University Scholarships and Open Scholarships, follow.

The next group of symbols covers positions of authority held. HS. Head of School (three are included in the list), SP. Senior Prefect (never more than four at one time), P. Prefect, SubP. Sub-Prefect; followed by Captaincies and Vice-Captaincies of Games, etc.

In the next group are shown distinctions gained, i.e. LX. elected to the Sixty; DSM. Distinguished Service Medal, a high distinction given only to boys who have given outstanding service or exercised a marked influence in the school. CSM. Company Service Medal, awarded for special acts of service for the school; ChM. Chorister's Medal, awarded for long and efficient service as a Chorister of the Chapel.

The Sixty is the upper section of the Company of Honour and Service and forms a sort of elected school aristocracy, the qualifi-

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cations for which are actual or potential leadership, service given to the school, influence among companions, moral tone, and such-like.

The P.T. Leader's medal of the Company is given to boys who qualify after long training as P.T. instructors. The standard is very high. To gain the oak-leaf in addition is very rare.

The next group of symbols is concerned with athletic achievement and pre-military training, as follows: RXV. Rugby XV; CXI, Cricket XI; HXI. Hockey XI; TVI. Tennis VI. (c) indicates that full or half-colours were gained.

In field athletics a boy may gain first or second colours by reaching a certain standard in some special event and/or the All Round Badge, given for reaching a set of standards, varying according to age, in a group of events, rather on the lines of the County Badge. Only one can be won in any year. These are shown as: A(c). Athletics Colours; 3ARB. three All Round Badges gained. B. and S. are used to indicate outstanding prowess in Boxing and Swimming respectively. ATC(P). indicates that the Proficiency Certificate of the Air Training Corps was gained. (L) after ATC. indicates that rank was reached or proficiency gained after leaving school in a local and not in the School Squadron.

It was found too complicated to include membership of house game teams and these are not listed.

Marked ability in music, drama or art are shown: Mus., D., Art. (T) indicates that the boy went on to another school. A Division is the year division immediately below that in which the School Certificate is taken; it can be entered at the beginning of the third year.

A number of boys included in the list were chosen for Short University Courses for Commissions in the Royal Artillery or the Royal Air Force, for State Bursaries, or for Engineering Cadetships.

A short remark after each boy is used to complete the picture and to bring out qualities which could not be shown by symbols.

In the last column a final all-round grade mark is given. The

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outstanding boys of the year are shown as A+. Those marked A were of slightly lower calibre but of first rate quality in one way or another. Those graded as A— and B+ were boys of good quality but not quite of the first class. Those marked B were average, while those marked B— had undistinguished school careers. The few candidates marked C were, for one reason or another, unsatisfactory.

### 2

The *case histories*<sup>1</sup> are set on the following pages. They should be studied with care. The reader should strive, so far as is possible, to get a picture of each boy and to determine for himself the extent to which the entrance examination succeeded in its attempted task of prognostication.

<sup>1</sup> The term, *case history*, has been criticised as smacking too much of the psychological laboratory. The term, *profile*, has been suggested and is possibly a better one.



	C.E.'s O. of M.	Age	I.Q.	Marks	School Report	History	Final Grade
I	1	10.9	126	407	M/S	SC6 (3A & 2c) H.C8 Wilts U Sch. Librarian P. LX DSM. Brilliant boy, handicapped, however, throughout his school career by a rheumatic heart which slowed down progress.	A+
II	2	11.0	130 plus	400	A/S	SC4 (A & 3c) HC7 (referred back in Phy.) H of S. Capt. of T. LX. D.S.M. Corp. ATC(P). RXV(c). CXI(c). HXI(c). TVI(c). 1 ARB. R.A Univ. Course. Showed signs of brilliance during his early school career and was expected to develop into an outstanding mathematician but for some reason did not. Intellectually much above average. Played a prominent part in school life and became Head of the School.	A+
III	3	11.3	130	374	AA/S	SC4 (3A & 2c). HC6. Wilts U. Sch. Exh. (History), Camb. SP., Capt. of A. LX. DSM Corp. ATC(P). RXV(c). A(c). twice Victor Ludorum, 100 yds. record (10½ sec.). Brilliant all-round boy, distinguished alike in scholarship and games. Cambridge 'blue'.	A+

	<i>C.E.'s O. of M.</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>I.Q.</i>	<i>Marks</i>	<i>School Report</i>	<i>History</i>	<i>Final Grade</i>
IV	4	11.5	130	371	AA/S	fSC5, HXI(c). Well-meaning but unreliable and lazy,	B
V	6	11.2	118	369	M/S	SC4 (4A & 2c) HC6. B of E Sch. Oriental Lang. Univ. of London. P. LX. DSM. ATC(P), 1 ARB. Clever boy with a flair for languages; of quiet personality but played an important part in school life	A+
VI	7	11.0	120	369	AA/S	Left after one year (T).	—
VII	8	11.5	116	367	AA/S	SC4 (1A & 2c). VI( $\frac{1}{3}$ ) LX. 1 ARB. Slow but sound. Broke down in health after one term in Sixths.	B+
VIII	9	10.11	128	359	A/R	Not up to SC after five years. Undistinguished alike in work and school life.	B—
IX	10	10.9	130	358	M/S	SC4 (1A & 3c) VI ( $\frac{1}{3}$ ). Sub.P. LX. P.T. Leader. Ch. Very vigorous boy with a good brain.	A
X	11	10.11	124	353	AA/S	SC5 (3A & 1c) VI( $\frac{1}{3}$ ). Sub.P. Capt. House LX, CSM. RXV(c), CXI. HXI (c) R.A.F. Univ. Course (after leaving School). A good brain but inclined to give in under difficulties. Good all-round athlete. Unassuming.	A

	<i>C.E.'s O. of M.</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>I.Q.</i>	<i>Marks</i>	<i>School Report</i>	<i>History</i>	<i>Final Grade</i>
<b>XI</b>	14	10.8	128	346	AA/S	SC5 (1A & 4c) VI(1). RXV(c). Not particularly distinguished in any way, but a useful member of the School.	B+
<b>XII</b>	15	11.3	128	345	AA/R	SC6 (3c) LX. CSM. HXI. TVI. 3 ARB. Intellectually slow but of steady character, popular and good at certain games.	A- or B+
<b>XIII</b>	16	10.11	121	344	AA/R	SC5 (2A & 2c) A(c) 1 ARB. Sergt. ATC(L). R.A.F. Univ Course (after leaving School). Reasonable brain and excelled in field athletics.	B
<b>XIV</b>	17	11.4	123	338	A/R	SC5(4c). LX CSM. A plodder, of sound character, and with a high sense of service.	B+
<b>XV</b>	18	10.10	120	337	A/R	SC5 (1A & 2c). VI(1). LX. CSM. A nervous unreliable type when a small boy, but outgrew his defects and latter part of school career marked by high sense of service	B+
<b>XVI</b>	19	11.6	114	334	AA/R	Three years to reach A. Div. when he left (T).	C

	<i>C.E.'s O. of M.</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>I.Q.</i>	<i>Marks</i>	<i>School Report</i>	<i>History</i>	<i>Final Grade</i>
XVII	24	11.5	121	328	AA/R	SC5 (1A & 1C). RXV (c). B, S, 1 ARB. F/Sergt. ATC(L)(P). R.A.F. Univ. Course. Of average intellectual ability; a fine physical type, good athlete and gym- nast.	A— or B+
XVIII	25	10.10	116	328	M/S	SC5(5c). HC7 (passed Chem. and Biol. but failed in Maths). SP. Prefect of Chapel LX DSM. ATC(P) En- gineering Cadetship. A boy of strong religious sense who played a prominent part in school life.	A
XIX	26	10.8	112	323	A/R	SC4 (1A & 6c). HC6. Sub P LX. Mus. Of high intellectual ability. Played a useful part in school life, particularly in musical activities; leader of the Or- chestra.	A
XX	29	11.6	116	318	AA/S	SC4 (2A & 3c). VI(1) P. LX. CSM. Of high intellectual ability and char- acter. A potential university scholar had he remained at school longer.	A
XXI	30	10.7	121	316	AA/R	SC5 (5c). VI (3). LX. Leader of Chor- isters Ch. M. 4 ARB. Mus. D. Of pleasant but not outstanding per- sonality.	A—

	<i>C.E.'s O. of M.</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>I.Q.</i>	<i>Marks</i>	<i>School Report</i>	<i>History</i>	<i>Final Grade</i>
XXII	31	11.6	115	316	M/S	SC4 (5A & 3c). HC6 (4Ds). 1st M.B. Wilts. U. Sch. Kitchener Sch. Exhib. (Science), Camb. P. House Capt. S. LX. DSM. ATC(P). Mus. D Art. A truly brilliant boy with a wide range of gifts.	A+
XXIII	32	10.8	115	314	AA/S	SC5 (3A & 2c). fHC7. P. V. Capt. of B. LX. DSM. P.T. Leaders medal (oak leaf). RXV(c). A(c). S. B. A fine type. Very hardworking and careful, but lacking in capacity for abstract thought.	A+
XXIV	33	10.6	114	307	AA/S	SC4 (2A & 4c). HC6 (2Ds). Wilts U. Sch. Sch (History), Camb. H of S, P. of Chapel. LX. DSM. ChM. Sergt. ATC(P). Mus. Art. A brilliant boy, one of the finest historical brains I have ever taught.	A+
XXV	34	10.11	119	305	M/S	SC5 (2A & 3c). HC7. P. LX. DSM. Sergt. ATC(P). RXV(c). HXI. 2 ARB. A boy of very good critical brain; developed rather slowly at first and then flowered into a boy of striking personality and good all-round gifts.	A+

	<i>C.E.'s O. of M.</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>I.Q.</i>	<i>Marks</i>	<i>School Report</i>	<i>History</i>	<i>Final Grade</i>
XXVI	35	11.3	108	304	AA/S	SC4 (A & 3c). HC6. P. LX. ATC(P). Engineering Cadetship. Success due perhaps rather to industry than on account of inherent gifts.	A
(S)							
XXVII	36	11.1	126	303	AA/S	SC4(5c). HC6. Wilts. U. Sch. State Bursary; Camb. P. LX. ATC(P). Of rather diffident personality but with marked scientific and mathematical gifts.	A
XVIII	37	11.7	120	302	A/R	SC not taken after five years. 1 ARB. Corp. ATC(L)(P). Undistinguished school career.	B—
XXIX	38	10.11	109	301	AA/R	SC5 (2c). VI½. LX. 2 ARB. Of good character but of not more than average distinction in any direc- tion.	B
XXX	40	10.7	111	300	AA/R	Reached A. Div. after three years when he left (T).	—
XXXI	43	11.3	121	294	AA/S	SC5 (1c). LX. F/Sgt. ADCG. Vigorous and pleasant character. Un- distinguished academically and not particularly industrious but of good sterling type.	A— or B+

<i>C.E.'s</i> <i>O. of M.</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>I.Q.</i>	<i>Marks</i>	<i>School</i> <i>Report</i>	<i>History</i>	<i>Final</i> <i>Grade</i>	
XXXXII	44	10.8	118	294	AA/S	SC5 (2A & 5c). VI(1). LX. CSM. ATC(L)(P) Engineering Cadetship. A boy of very pleasant personality with plenty of common sense, very industri- ous—he gained thirteen special praise reports during his school career, prob- ably a record.	A or A—
XXXXIII	45	10.7	117	292	AA/S	Not up to SC after five years	C
XXXXIV	47	11.1	103	290	AA/S	fSC5. Colourless and counted for little in school life.	B—
(End of Group A)							
XXXXV	49	11.9	113	277	AA/S	fSC5 LX. Well liked but did not carry very much weight.	B
XXXXVI	51	10.8	111	277	A/R	SC6 (6c) VI(1) Sub.P. LX. ChM. ATC(P). RXV. HXI(c). TVI S. Matured very well after a poor start. Entered a Training College for Teach- ers and did well.	A
XXXXVII	53	11.3	107	276	AA/S	Not up to SC standard after five years. Mus. Academically weak but of sterling char- acter with musical ability above aver- age.	B+

	<i>C.E.'s O. of M.</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>I Q.</i>	<i>Marks</i>	<i>School Report</i>	<i>History</i>	<i>Final Grade</i>
XXXVIII	57	10.11	116	271	AA/S	Left after one term (T).	—
XXXIX	58	10.10	117	267	AA/S	SC5 (3c). VI(1). Sub.P. LX. HXI(c). CXI(c). Mus. Matured well intellectually at end of school career.	A
XL	59	11.1	117	267	AA/S	Left after two years (T).	—
XLI	61	11.4	118	265	AA/R	Left after one year (T).	—
XLII	64	11.5	116	268	AA/S	SC4 (1A & 3c) VI(4). LX CSM. Art. Academically quite good and a fine craftsman.	B+
(S) XLIII	65	11.1	130	262	M/S	Left at end of four years on eve of S.C. Division (T). Of average intellectual ability; a promising athlete	B+
(S) XLIV	66	11.3	113	261	AA/S	SC5 (4c). Average type not particularly distinguished.	B
(S) XLV	78	11.6	117	254	AA/S	SC5 (6c). VI(1). Sub P LX. P.T. Leader. A useful member of the School; not in the first rank but made good use of his talents.	B+



	<i>G.E.'s O. of M.</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>I.Q.</i>	<i>Marks</i>	<i>School Report</i>	<i>History</i>	<i>Final Grade</i>
XLVI	79	11.3	113	253	AA/S	fSC6. F/Sgt. ATC(L)(P). Academically rather weak, not very industrious.	B—
(S)							
XLVII	82	11.3	111	250	AA/S	SC5 (1c). ATC(L)(P). Rather colourless.	B—
XLVIII	84	11.0	100	248	AA/S	SC5½ (5c). VI(1½) P. Capt. of B. V. Capt. of A. LX. DSM. ChM. RXVI(c). A(c). B. 4 ARB. Sergt. ATC(P). R.A.F. Univ. Course. First rate; fine, vigorous character, was one of the strongest influences in the school.	A+
XLIX	85	10.8	100	247	AA/R	fSC6. Undistinguished and rather crude.	C
L	86	11.8	114	246	M/S	Left after 3½ years, then in A. Div. (T).	B—
LI	88	10.11	99	246	A/S	fSC6. ChM. L/C ADCC. Pleasant and keen but not highly quali- fied in any way.	B
LII	90	12.4	115	244	—	fSC4 then left.	—
LIII	91	11.4	109	244	AA/R	SC5 (2c). HXI. 2 ARB. Character marked by a high sense of service.	B+

	<i>C.E.'s O. of M.</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>I.Q.</i>	<i>Marks</i>	<i>School Report</i>	<i>History</i>	<i>Final Grade</i>
LIV	94	11.0	101	242	A/R	SC5 (3c). LX ATC(P). D. Of sturdy character.	B+
LV	95	10.6	116	241	A/R	fSC6. Mentally rather dull.	C
LVI	104	12.1	100	234	A/R	Left after 1½ years (T).	—
LVII	108	11.0	109	231	AA/R	fSC6. LX. CSM. Ch. Mus.	B
LVIII	110	11.7	105	231	AA/R	SC5 (1A & 3c). VI(2½) H. of S. Capt. of R. V. Capt. of H RXV(c). HXI(c). A(c). P.T. Leader (oak leaf). Musician's Medal (oak leaf). Band Sergt. ATC. Mus. One of the finest boys I have ever known. A first-rate Head of the School, very good athlete and a brilliant musi- cian, played fifteen instruments.	A+

(End of Group B)

LIX	121	11.5	101	222	M/S	SC5 (4c). VI(1½). Sub.P. LX. CSM. ChM. RXV(c). ATC(P). Though a little unreliable at times, a fine type of boy; Commission in the Indian Army.	A
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	<i>C.E.'s O. of M.</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>I.Q.</i>	<i>Marks</i>	<i>School Report</i>	<i>History</i>	<i>Final Grade</i>
LX	147	11.8	99	203	AA/S	SC5 (2c). VI(1). Sub.P. LX. CSM. ChM. RXV(c). CXI. HXI(c). TVI. P.T. Leader. ATC(P). R.A.F. Univ. Course Of moderate intellectual gifts but bal- anced by prowess in other directions.	A
LXI	158	11.9	95	194	A/D	Left after four years without SC. CSM. ChM. 1 ARB. Of poor academic quality but a useful member of the school.	B—

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### 3

What value has a survey carried out in this way? While it does not permit of the drawing up of neat statistical tables, it is possible, through it, to compare the picture of any individual boy given by the entrance examination and that given by a study of his school career. It is also possible to get a very good idea of the degree of validity of the examination as a whole and to draw a number of, at any rate tentative, conclusions.

(1) The Entrance Examination did its work of selecting boys suitable for a grammar school education reasonably well. There were few boys selected who did not, to a greater or lesser extent, prove their worth. Whether there were among those rejected some who might have done better cannot be determined. Inquiries among the heads of Senior Schools, however, revealed no cases of boys who clearly ought to have been chosen for grammar school education. The probability is that no boy of outstanding all-round merit failed to get in, but it is possible that some were rejected who might have done as well or better than some of the poor ones who were successful. Though there may have been a few mistakes, selection based, as this was, on a combination of an intelligence test and a written examination, corrected and modified by school records, optional tests in special skills and an oral examination, produced good results, better than one might have expected from an examination taken at an age when prognostication is not supposed to be easy.

The order in which the candidates fell was, however, often faulty. A study of the Order of Merit shows, at the top of the list, a small group of first-rate candidates; then a much bigger group with considerable variations, followed by a fairly large group all of whom turned out very well. After No. XXVII (36 in the County Examiner's Order of Merit) variations are considerable, with candidates finally graded A appearing until the very end of the list. The majority of the lower grade candidates appear in the latter half of the list. It is unlikely that one will be able to invent an entrance examination in which there will not

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be a few who do well in the examination but do not fulfil their promise and vice versa.

What appears to be very important is that the examination procedure should be such that the potentially good candidates, who do not do well in the written examination and whose positions in the Order of Merit are low, are discovered. To find them one cannot rely on either I.Q. or written tests alone. They can be picked out sometimes through school reports, sometimes through an oral examination, sometimes through a test of special skill; No. LVIII was selected primarily on his high ability in music; neither written examination, school report nor I.Q. gave any indication of his real worth.

(2) A study of the survey indicates that one ought to be cautious in giving too great weight to I.Q.'s, arrived at through group intelligence tests. The test used in this examination was one of the Moray Group Tests. No. IV (I.Q. 130) and No. VIII (I.Q. 128) failed to pass the School Certificate after five years, No. XII (I.Q. 128) only struggled through the examination after six years, while Nos. XXII and XXIV, two of the most brilliant boys of their year, one as a scientist, the other as an historian, scored I.Q.'s of only 115 and 114 respectively. Nos. XLVIII and LVIII, both of whom proved to be of good academic ability and to possess marked capacity for leadership, had I.Q.'s of 100 and 105 only; while the I.Q.'s (101 and 99) of Nos. LIX and LX gave no idea of their real calibre; both got in on a combination of good school report and interview.

(3) One factor in the success of the entrance examination was certainly due to its being decentralized. While the written examination was a large-scale one, carried out by a County Authority, from that point everything was left in the hands of the schools selecting candidates. Thus, not only was there more of the human touch, but also those conducting the final stages knew that, if any mistakes were made, they would be the sufferers. They had every reason to exercise the most scrupulous care. Further, it was possible to establish closer contact with the heads of the schools presenting candidates than there would have been had the examination been more centralized and im-

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personal, and there was greater knowledge of the idiosyncrasies of those drawing up the school reports.

Each candidate interviewed was a real boy, trying for admission to a particular school, not a unit judged as to his suitability or otherwise from an abstract 'secondary education'. This is important. It is much easier to prognosticate whether a boy will prove suitable for a particular school, the character of the education and life of which is known by those called upon to reach a decision, than to determine whether a boy is suitable for some particular grade of education. Every factor which ought to be considered in reaching a decision can be taken into account. It is stated above that the deciding factor in the admission of No. LVIII, who so signally justified his choice, was musical talent. That would have been a less relevant factor if the school for admission to which the boy was being judged had not been a school with a strong musical tradition, where a boy with musical talent had full scope. It is interesting to note that some examiners with very wide experience are tending to assert that selection should always be made with reference to a particular known community; this can only be done through a large measure of decentralization.

(4) The survey raises the query: How much should academic standard count in determining suitability for admission to a grammar school, how much weight should be given to other factors? Personal qualities are equally as important as academic standard. They are, however, more difficult to assess, and compare; they do not lend themselves to standardized expression. Consequently too great weight has tended to be given to a limited sort of academic standard. Our experience has enabled an effective, though not infallible, procedure to be worked out. Boys who gain a high position in the written examination (I.Q. and papers in English and arithmetic) may, provided the school report does not seriously contradict this evidence, be accepted with the reasonable hope that, with few exceptions, they will prove their worth. The further one goes down the list, however, the less the degree of reliability a written examination appears to have. In the middle and lower ranges far more reliance may,

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with advantage, be placed on the evidence of school reports and of the oral examination. The evidence of possession of some special skill should be given great weight; for not only has it been proved that its possession is an important factor in general development, but also certain careers, for which a grammar school education is the right preparation, are dependent on specialized ability.

### 4

One valuable use of a survey made in this way is to provide evidence in the discussion of some particular issue. For instance, there is a good deal of difference of opinion on what should be the minimum age of admission to a grammar school. Some would make eleven or even later the minimum age. Let us examine what evidence this survey provides.

Below are listed, in the order they appear in the survey, all those boys who were admitted between ten and a half and eleven years of age, together with what the survey tells of their academic achievement.

1	10.9	SC 6, HC 8 Wilts. Univ. Sch. 8 Camb. Univ.
2	10.11	Not up to SC after five years.
3	10.9	SC 4, VI ( $1\frac{1}{2}$ ).
4	10.11	SC 5, VI (1) Short Univ. Course R.A.F. after leaving school.
5	10.8	SC 5, VI (1).
6	10.11	SC 5, Short Univ. Course R.A.F. after leaving school.
7	10.10	SC 5 VI (1).
8	10.10	SC 5, HC 7 (pass Chem. and Biol. but failed Maths), Engineering Cadetship.
9	10.8	SC 4, HC 6.
10	10.7	SC 5, VI ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ).
11	10.8	SC 5, fHC 7.
12	10.6	SC 4, HC 6 Wilts. Univ. Sch. 7 Scholar Cambridge $7\frac{1}{2}$ .
13	10.11	SC 5, HC 7.
14	10.11	SC 5, VI ( $\frac{3}{4}$ ).
15	10.8	SC 5, VI (1) Engineering Cadetship.
16	10.7	Not up to SC after five years.
17	10.8	SC 6, VI (1) Training College.
18	10.10	SC 6, VI (1).
19	10.8	fSC 6.
20	10.11	fSC 6
21	10.6	fSC 6.

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Of these twenty-one boys two went up to Cambridge University. No. 1 would probably have gained an open scholarship had he not been held up during his school career by serious illness. His entry at 10.9 enabled him to get a Wilts. Scholarship just in time; No. 12, a truly brilliant boy, took  $7\frac{1}{2}$  years to reach open scholarship standard—he gained a First at Cambridge. Six took the Higher Certificate of whom four passed; of these, four required five years for their School Certificate course, that is seven years at school in all. In addition to these six, nine, i.e. fifteen out of twenty-one, passed into Sixth Forms. Two were chosen for R.A.F. University Short Courses and entered universities that way; two were awarded Engineering Cadetships and one entered a Training College. Only five out of the twenty-one boys failed to reach School Certificate standard, three being boys low in the list.

The evidence from these *case histories* is that deferment of entry for a year would have been for the majority of these boys disastrous; insufficient time to prepare to compete for open scholarships or sit for Higher Certificate; inability, through the financial circumstances of their parents, to have a period in the Sixth Form (it is extremely doubtful whether any of the nine shown above would have returned if they had taken the School Certificate a year later); possibly, though this cannot be said with certainty, some would not have remained at school to take the School Certificate.

### 5

While it has not been possible to work out a survey as full as this for any other year, other years have been submitted to a less detailed scrutiny.

In one of the years subjected to this less detailed examination, ten of the eleven boys who later won university scholarships were included in the first twenty places in the written examination; the eleventh was placed in Group A in the County Examiner's Order of Merit, but considerably lower; he had been, however, moved up into the first thirty in the Final Order of Merit on additional evidence. The I.Q.'s of these



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eleven university scholars, in Science (5), Agriculture (3), Oriental Languages (1), History (1), Choral (1), were 130, 130, 128, 112; 130+, 117, 116; 126; 119; 128. The I.Q. of one of the Science scholars is missing. A boy who later won a State Bursary (I.Q. 117), was placed by the County Examiner in Group B but was up-graded to Group A in the Final Order of Merit.

As in the full survey, which has been the subject of this inquiry, so in this survey, there were found boys with I.Q.'s of 126 and above who faded out and, in the lower group, boys with low I.Q.'s, such as 108 and 98, who later distinguished themselves.

A similar survey of another year revealed four university scholars (I.Q.'s 133, 132, 131 and 116) and a music scholar (I.Q. 123) in the top half of the list, mingled with some much poorer material, while in Group B appeared a boy with an I.Q. of 107 who passed the Higher Certificate with ease and fell not far short of open university scholarship standard and a boy with an I.Q. of 111 who won a scholarship for music. Most strange was a boy, placed in Group C, with an I.Q. of 107, who was rejected. He tried again the following year, and was placed in the same group, with an I.Q. of 100. He just got in on his oral examination. At the end of six years he passed the Higher Certificate and was awarded a University Scholarship.

It would appear that, if these two years were subjected to the same detailed examination, they would show much the same results as that which has been examined in detail.

A small survey undertaken recently was concerned with the relation between the position gained in the Entrance Examination and the possession of musical ability. Of the five best musicians in the school at the time, three, two French horn players, who were also talented singers, and a clarinet player, gained high places in the Entrance Examination and had high I.Q.'s, 128 to 135; all also showed high academic ability. The fourth, a beautiful singer and a talented trumpet player, was placed high in the Entrance Examination but his I.Q. was only 105; he has shown marked artistic ability but his general academic standard has not been more than average. The fifth,

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a violinist, possibly the most brilliant of them all, was placed in the middle of Group B only, with an I.Q. of 112; he passed the School Certificate at the end of four years, at fifteen years of age, with 2 A's. and 5 Credits.

The small amount of evidence available seems to indicate that the group I.Q. can tell little about the possession of marked artistic and musical talent. If further research should prove that to be so, the case for the inclusion in an Entrance Examination of tests of special skill is fully proved. For surely no one would argue that the grammar school is not the right place for the education of the talented artist or musician.

### 6

The survey which has been the theme of this essay was made some years ago. Much experience has been gained since the year in which the boys whose *case histories* have been considered were admitted to the school I serve as headmaster. It has recently been possible to tabulate six tentative conclusions, based on some twenty years of experience in selecting boys for a particular grammar school. With those tentative conclusions, which will possibly be used by a panel of investigators as the starting-point of a much wider inquiry, this essay may appropriately end. Let it not be thought that I am arguing that they are 'proved' by this survey of a single year. None are, however, invalidated by this limited inquiry; indeed the inquiry supports all of them. For the moment they are put forward as tentative, not established. They are:

1. That, while it may turn out to be impossible at 11+ to assess, with any degree of accuracy, suitability for some sort of abstract type of education, it is possible, under certain circumstances, to attain a very high degree of reliability if one thinks in terms of admission to a particular school community.

2. That all single entrance tests, I.Q., written examinations, school reports, and interviews, taken alone, are unreliable. When, however, they are appropriately combined, the standard of reliability becomes very high.

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3. That any order of merit, based on I.Q. and written examination, becomes increasingly unreliable the further one goes down the list. Consequently admission to a grammar school, must rely, in the case of a good many children, primarily on a consideration of personal qualities.

4. That tests in special skills are very valuable instruments of diagnosis in assessing suitability for a grammar school education. Music, in particular, when combined with other factors, appears to have a high prognostication value.

5. That group I.Q.'s taken in conjunction with other factors are very useful; alone they are very deceptive.

6. That a decentralized examination has a higher validity than a centralized one.

To all of which some may reply: 'But why not abolish all this selection altogether and put all types of character, personality and aptitude into one "multilateral" school?' That is, however, another issue, which cannot be argued here.

## XI

### THE SALISBURY EXPERIMENT: A STUDY IN EXAMINATION TECHNIQUE<sup>1</sup>

**T**he Oxford University delegacy for local examinations announced not long ago a new experiment in the setting of history papers for the School Certificate examination. This summer it will provide, for those schools which desire to take it, a history paper containing questions which test ability to use historical material, as an alternative to a paper of the usual type. The new departure marks the successful completion of the first stage of what has become known as the 'Salisbury experiment'.

The experiment grew out of my discontent as an assistant master (a discontent shared by many of my fellow-teachers) with the usual type of history paper. This, I felt, placed too great stress on memorization and tested very inadequately the most valuable results of a good history course. The nature of the experiment can best be explained by considering the question: What is the function of history teaching in a secondary school?

It is desirable that the pupil should know something of the past; it is perhaps even more desirable that he should have

<sup>1</sup> First printed in *The Times Educational Supplement*, 23rd May 1936, under the title, 'The New History Examinations'. A history paper of the type described has now definitely proved its value. Such a paper has been set each year as a normal part of the Oxford School Certificate examination since 1936. It is not impossible that it will serve as a model for papers in other subjects. A co-ordinated examination, of the sort suggested in the last paragraph, in a Social Studies synthesis, has, as yet, not been tried. Experiments in the structure of a Social Studies synthesis at this stage must be carried much further than they have been up to the present before the details of such an examination could be properly worked out.

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learnt to view the present in the light of the past experience of the human race. The results of an enlightened history course cannot, however, be expressed in terms of the sum of knowledge gained. Through such a course a number of abilities ought to be acquired, for instance, the ability to use books intelligently, to collect material, to compare one point of view with another, and to draw deductions from known facts. The actual knowledge gained may soon be forgotten, but if as the result of the history course these abilities are acquired, they will probably remain after the pupil's schooldays are over and will be an invaluable equipment to him both as a participating citizen and in his work in the world.

It may legitimately be argued that it is the function of an examination to test whether or not the boy has acquired these abilities. It is true that the usual type of history paper does test ability as well as knowledge, but it does so only partially and with no degree of certainty. Not only is the 'essay' type of question, as Professor Valentine in his 'The Reliability of Examinations' has shown, an unreliable test, but also, since the candidate is normally required to carry all the facts he needs in his memory, unless he happens to remember just those facts which the questions set by the examiner demand, he cannot show with any certainty what ability he possesses, unless it be the ability to conceal his ignorance. If it be agreed, therefore, that it is the function of a history examination to test ability as well as, and apart from, knowledge, the paper must contain questions from which the memory factor is eliminated. In such questions the material needed for the answering of the questions must be provided.

One method would be to allow the candidate access to a library; another to permit him to bring text-books into the examination room. Both methods, however, present difficulties in an examination of any size and conducted on the lines of the present school certificate. As a tentative solution to the problem, I put forward in an article in *History*, the journal of the Historical Association (July 1928), a new type of question. It consisted of eight passages on the career of Napoleon and a set of ques-

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tions which could be answered by reference to the passages printed. Though a few welcomed the suggestion, it received little support from history teachers as a whole. Some considered it too hard a test for candidates of school certificate age, others criticized it as being more a test of intelligence than of history. Early in 1931 the suggestion was placed before the secretary of the Oxford Local Examinations delegacy, and that which had been rejected by the teachers of history was welcomed by the examiners. The delegates offered to conduct an experiment in which, in order to test out its possibilities, the candidates from Bishop Wordsworth's School, Salisbury, should take a paper of this experimental type in addition to the paper of the usual type which they would take for ordinary examination purposes. This procedure was followed in July 1931 and 1932, and reports were printed in *History* (January 1932 and January 1933). Though the examiners were not as yet convinced that the experiment was fully successful, they recommended that it should be continued. In July 1934 and July 1935, therefore, candidates of Bishop Wordsworth's School were allowed to take a paper of the experimental type instead of the ordinary one as an integral part of the examination.

During this second stage a good deal of progress was made. In particular the objective of the paper, which is not quite the same as that of a paper of the usual type, was more fully worked out, and the means of attaining that objective more clearly perceived. The form of the paper was also developed. In July 1935 it was divided into three parts, Parts I and II being included in the first paper for which one and a half hours was allowed; Part III, forming the second paper, for which also one and a half hours was allowed. Part I consisted of three compulsory questions, designed to test a general knowledge of the facts of the period (European history, 1815 to present day) studied. The first question was a test of chronology, the second a map question, and the third demanded that the candidate should write short notes of five lines on five out of eight given events and personages. Part II consisted of four questions of the ordinary essay type, of which the candidate had to attempt two. The

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principle of easy questions and strict marking was followed in setting and marking this part of the paper. Part III consisted of eleven short extracts concerned with 'Events in North Africa and the Triple Alliance, 1879-82'.

The instructions given were as follows:

Read the following extracts carefully. They contain the details needed for answers to the questions that follow at the end, but your general knowledge of the state of affairs in Europe at this period should also be used.

The questions must be answered shortly and definitely. In some cases four or five lines should be enough, and in no case should more than twenty lines be needed.

The following questions were set. All had to be attempted:

1. Give an account of the origin and course of French policy in Tunis from 1875 to 1881.

2. What was Bismarck's attitude to French policy in Tunis?

3. What did M. Clemenceau mean by the words in which he criticized the Treaty of Bardo (extract G)? What were the friendships to which he referred?

4. Give an account of the attitude of the British Government in the events described in the extracts.

5. Why were (a) Germany and (b) Austria not very enthusiastic when Italy proposed that she should join their alliance?

6. Do these extracts give any hints that may explain the following later developments: (a) Italy's refusal to join Germany and Austria in the Great War; (b) the relations of Italy and France since the Great War; (c) Italian measures against Abyssinia in the present year, 1935?

Mr. H. E. M. Icelly, University Reader in Education, Oxford, is the examiner who has been chiefly concerned in the experiment. Neither he nor I consider that every problem has as yet been solved. Much has yet to be learnt about the best way of setting papers of this type, and still more about the best way to mark them and the exact standards which ordinary boys may be expected to attain. The experiment appears to have proved, however, that a paper of this type can be set and marked without undue difficulty, and that it gives as accurate an estimate

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of the standard of a candidate as a paper of the usual kind. There is a slight amount of evidence which inclines one to think that the results obtained are more accurate, but until the experiment is tried out with a much greater number of candidates, and further experience in settling and marking the papers is gained, it is impossible to reach any certain conclusion on this point.

Various criticisms have been made by teachers of history of a paper of this type, one being that it is a test of intelligence and not of history. There is increasing agreement, however, that the object of all examinations should be to test not merely the knowledge of the candidate but that which has been gained as a result of his studies and will remain when the facts he has learnt are forgotten. A paper of this type sets out to test more than history; it attempts to test those abilities which should be acquired through a history course. It tests both history and 'intelligence'.

Others suggest that a test of this sort is beyond the capacity of a boy of school certificate age. The experiment does not bear out this criticism. Practically all the boys who took the examination in 1934 and 1935 were able to answer the questions set in Part III with little difficulty. In 1934 of the twenty-nine candidates who took the paper, twenty obtained 'credit' or higher, four passed, and five failed. Of the 1934 group the examiner wrote: 'With very few exceptions they showed a grasp of the main facts and tendencies of the period and an accurate knowledge of detail which were exceptional, and their work was set out in a clear and direct way which gave a good impression.' In 1935 thirty-six candidates, the majority of whom were under sixteen, took the paper; twenty-five gained 'credit' or above, seven passed, and four failed. Of them the examiner wrote: 'The grasp of the essentials of the period and the way in which that knowledge was set out were most praiseworthy, and a lively impression was left of the vitality of the work in history at this school.'

The criticism that the study of contemporary historical documents is unsuitable for boys at this stage shows a fundamental



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misunderstanding of the character of the experiment. It was never intended that the test should be one of ability to use contemporary historical documents, or that a study of such documents should necessarily form part of the preparation for the test. The test is one of ability to use historical material. Instead of the candidate being expected to carry all the facts he needs in his memory, the facts are given him so that his ability may be more exactly gauged. The material provided may be dates, isolated facts, extracts from contemporary sources, passages from historical works, indeed anything which will enable the candidate to answer the questions set and to show the character of his mind. Moreover, as has been pointed out by the examiner, to limit the material used to contemporary documents involves too great labour in setting the paper, since to collect sufficient suitable contemporary documents necessitates a great deal of research and, if the period is a short one, the supply of them is limited.

To sum up, the experimental paper attempts to test three things: first, the general outline knowledge of a period which all candidates may be expected to have; secondly, the capacity to express their knowledge in clear, simple prose; and thirdly, the ability to use material under conditions which approach, as nearly as is possible in a large-scale examination, to the conditions of real life. In these days of easy access to reference books no one attempts to cumber up his memory with all the knowledge he needs. Since the amount a candidate is expected to remember is considerably less, a paper of this sort imposes a smaller burden on the candidate than a paper of the usual type. It demands of him, however, a greater flexibility of mind and considerably more real constructive ability. While it necessitates a more liberal and less stereotyped training, it permits of greater freedom throughout the school course.

In this school it has been possible, without any detrimental effects on examination results, to abolish much of the usual history work done in schools, and to substitute material closer to the boy's experience and more valuable in training him for after life. In the year immediately preceding that in which the

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school certificate is taken, all formal history has been abandoned, and a course of social studies, including the study of elementary economics, governmental institutions, post-war history, and such manifestations of modern life as the Press, radio, cinema, and town-planning has been substituted. Adequate time is available for training in lucid expression, clear thinking, and the right use of books, and for the acquisition of those mental qualities which ought to be, but are not always, the results of secondary education.

Though this experiment has been confined to history, its significance is, I believe, wider. If the methods used are valuable in an examination in history, may they not be equally valuable in all the similar subjects of Group I? May it not be possible eventually to break down the artificial subject divisions between history, geography, economics, and literature in the school, and to devise a co-ordinated examination which will test with some degree of exactitude not merely the knowledge gained through these studies but, more important, the mental qualities which ought to result from them?

## XII

### A WILTSHIRE EXPERIMENT: A STUDY IN METHODS OF AWARDED UNIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIPS

There has been much discussion in recent years on means of increasing opportunities of university education and of ensuring that every boy and girl who can benefit from a university education is able to go to a university. Indeed, much of value has already been accomplished. The number of state and local authority scholarships has been increased; in the area I know intimately the increase has been from an average of about ten a year before 1939 to about thirty a year at the present time. The value of these scholarships has been raised, so that a poor parent of a qualified candidate need no longer feel that a university education for his son is beyond his means. Scholarships are tending to become less strictly competitive; those awarding them strive more and more to provide as many as there are candidates of proved worth. It is true to say that opportunities of university education are greater now than they ever were.

This is all to the good. In planning any further advance, however, it is essential both that the high standards of British university education should be preserved and also that we should guard against that happening in Great Britain which happened in the Germany of the early thirties, the production of numerous university graduates who could not be absorbed into the professions and occupations for which they had been trained and became a frustrated and dangerous element in the community. Provided, however, the proper standards are maintained, provided that the supply of university graduates is not

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allowed to exceed the demand, this enlargement of opportunity is sound policy. The trained products of the universities are national assets which Britain in her post-war difficulties cannot afford to lose.

With the enlargement of opportunity the method of selection becomes of increasing importance. It is necessary to take all possible care that the *potentially* best candidates are chosen. It is because I believe that what I shall call the Wiltshire experiment, an experiment carried out by the Wiltshire Education Authority, in close co-operation with the headmasters and headmistresses of the grammar schools of the county, over a period of fifteen years, has added something to our knowledge, that it appears to me to be worthy of description, examination and comment.

There is nothing particularly revolutionary in this experiment. It is possible that similar procedures have been evolved in other areas. Nor is my survey as full or complete as I might have wished. I have been compelled by circumstances to confine myself to an examination of the results of the experiment in relation to one school only. Nevertheless, that survey has revealed certain features which are, I believe, of value and points to conclusions which, though on this limited evidence they can only be regarded as tentative, will possibly, on a greater mass of evidence, prove to be valid.

The inception of the Wiltshire experiment arose from the researches, about 1930, of a young Assistant Director of Education into the performances at universities of Wiltshire candidates awarded scholarships solely on the results of the Higher Certificate Examination. They did not appear to be wholly satisfactory, and when the investigation was brought to the attention of the Education Committee, it was decided that a different method of selection should be immediately tried out.

Under this new method of selection, performance in the Higher Certificate Examination ceased to be the sole, in some cases the main, factor in determining awards. The total number of marks gained in the examination is regarded as irrelevant. The Higher Certificate has become, in part a qualifying

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examination, in part an examination through which the examiners may assess actual or potential excellence in some particular field of study. Very great weight is given to personal qualities, which may be in some awards the decisive factor. For instance, recently a boy whose grades in the Higher Certificate were: English, general paper P, scholarship paper P; French, general paper P, scholarship paper P; subsidiary subjects: History P, Latin G, was awarded a scholarship on high personal qualities, revealed in his school career and evident in an interview. Evidence was presented to show that he was not only likely to rise to a reasonable honours degree standard, but could also make good use of university training in after life, and that he had sacrificed his chances of good examination marks through an almost too high sense of duty and responsibility as Head of the School. These personal qualities are assessed through elaborate school records, assessments and reports.

An essay paper, containing a wide selection of general questions, of which the candidates are only called upon to do one, and which is read by all members of the interviewing board, is included. All candidates are called upon to appear before this interviewing board, the members of which have already formed a preliminary estimate of each of them from examiners' reports, school records and essay papers.

To sum up, the basic idea of the Wiltshire procedure is that suitability for a university is not solely a matter of academic standard, that, in order to choose the best candidates, it is necessary also to pay full regard to personal qualities. Indeed, one may go further and say that, even in assessing suitability from the academic point of view, better results are likely to be obtained if one does not rely entirely on performance in a written examination, but also takes into account school reports and the judgment of heads and their staffs.

In order to determine whether or not the Wiltshire procedure is superior to the common one, used in the award of state scholarships and of the scholarships of some local authorities, of relying entirely or primarily on performance in the Higher Certificate Examination, one must examine whether or not

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prognostication is at least as reliable and whether or not the effect on the life and culture of the school is more beneficial. If it can be shown that prognostication is more accurate, so much the better; the case is more clearly established. I suggest that, on a fuller survey than I am able to undertake, it may be possible to prove a greater accuracy. Since I am unable to set the table printed below against a similar table of candidates given awards solely on performance in the Higher Certificate, I am not in a position to make any sure assertion. It would be sufficient for our purpose, however, to show a comparatively equal validity if, in addition, it can be shown that the effects on the life and culture of the school are more beneficial. For the effects of any public examination or any method of awarding scholarships on the life and culture of the school is of great importance. Both are forms of control which, in part, though only in part, determine the type of education schools are able to give. Let us consider the results of the Wiltshire procedure.

In the table printed on pages 133-4 are set out all the candidates who were successful in gaining Wilts. University Scholarships from 1932, the year when the new scheme came into operation, and about whom sufficient information on their performance at a university is, up to the time of writing, available. Military and other national service has delayed the entry on or completion of university courses of a number of those who have been awarded scholarships. These candidates are not included in the table. Candidates, however, who gained degrees on, for instance, one instead of two parts of a Cambridge Tripos are included.

The following information about each candidate is given in the table: grades in the different subjects taken in the Higher Certificate; open scholarship or exhibition won at Oxford or Cambridge; university attended; subject and class of degree gained.

The first date shows the date when the Higher Certificate was taken. When the Wilts University Scholarship was awarded in a later year the date is shown in brackets on the right of the Higher Certificate gradings. In a number of cases the award of an open scholarship or exhibition influenced or determined the

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Wiltshire award. When, however, a candidate took an open scholarship examination and, though not successful, the evidence of his work in this examination was taken into account in the award of a Wilts. Scholarship, this is indicated thus+.

During the period under review certain changes were introduced into the Higher Certificate Examination. A definite scholarship or distinction paper was added to the general paper. At first performance in the general and scholarship papers was given as a single combined grade: this is shown G, i.e. Good mark in general and scholarship paper combined. Later a separate grade mark was given for the general and for the scholarship paper: this is shown G/P, i.e. Good mark in general paper, pass mark in scholarship paper. Candidates may take three papers at principal subject standard, or two papers at principal subject and two at subsidiary subject standard. When the latter course was followed, the results are shown as follows: Eng G Fr G // Germ P Lat G.

A candidate who has passed the Higher Certificate, but has not been awarded a scholarship, is not called upon to take the whole Higher Certificate again. He need only offer one subject, or, if he wishes, two subjects, in the following year. When such candidates took scholarship papers only these are shown thus, in the line below the full results of the previous year: Eng -/ G Hist -/ D. When both the general and the scholarship papers were taken, this is shown: Eng G/P Hist G/G.

Scholarships gained after entry to the university are indicated in the same column as the degree obtained. In two or three cases, when a first class was gained, the result of 'Mays' the examination taken at Cambridge, which is not a part of the degree examination, at the end of the first year, is shown.

Customs in awarding degrees vary from university to university. All degrees are honours degrees unless otherwise indicated. When the degree is taken in two parts the results in both parts are, when available, indicated, i.e. 1 Nat Sc II(1) 2 Nat Sc I indicates that the candidate gained a Second Class, First Division in Part I and a First Class in Part II of the Natural Sciences Tripos.

	<i>Higher Certificate</i>	<i>University</i>	<i>Degree</i>
I	1932		
II	Eng D Fr G Hist P	Oxford	Mod Lang III
III	Eng D Fr G Hist P	Bristol	Econ failed degree
IV	Fr G Maths G H Maths G	Oxford	Maths III
V	Eng G Fr D Hist D	Bristol	Hist I
VI	Eng G Fr G // Ger P Lat G	Oxford	Eng III
VII	Eng P Fr G // Ger G Lat P	Oxford	Mod Lang II
VIII	Eng G Fr G // Ger G Lat G	Oxford	Mod Greats III
	Eng G Fr P Hist G (1935)	Camb	1 Eng II (11)
IX	Eng D Fr G Hist G (1935)	Exh Eng (1935)	
X	Eng P Fr G // Ger G Art G	+Camb	Mays I 1 Hist II (1) 2 Hist II (1) Exh Hist
XI	Fr P Ph G Ch G	Bristol	Mod Lang pass degree
XII	P Maths G App M G Ph P	Bristol	Chem II
XIII	Fr G Hist G // Ger G Lat G	Oxford	Geog II Colonial Civil Service
XIV	Fr P Hist G // Eng P Lat G (1937)	Bristol	German II (1)
		Camb	1 Hist II (1)
		Exh Hist (1937)	
XV	Fr G Hist P // Ger G Lat G (1937)	+Oxford	Mod Lang groups 1939 Geog III 1947
XVI	Fr P P Maths G App Maths G (1938)	London	Maths I
XVII	P & App Maths G Ph G Ch G	Bristol	Phy I
XVIII	Fr G Hist G // Eng P Lat G	Camb	1 Hist I Sch Hist
XIX	Eng P Fr P // Hist P Lat G	Camb	1 Eng I 2 Hist II (1)
	Eng -/G Fr -/G (1939)	Exh Eng (1940)	
XX	Eng P Fr P // Hist P Lat G (1939)	Camb	
		Exh Eng (1939)	1 Eng II (11)
XXI	Eng P Fr P // Ger P Lat G	+Camb	1 Eng II (1) 2 Hist II (1)
	Eng -/G Fr -/P (Jan. 1941)		
XXII	Eng P Fr G Hist P	+Oxford	1 Hist II 2 Hist II Lecturer, Pol. Science,
	Fr -/G Hist -/G (1940)		Dublin



	<i>Higher Certificate</i>	<i>University</i>	<i>Degree</i>
XXIII	Eng P Fr P Hist D (1940)	Camb	1 Hist I 2 Hist I Research Studentship Sch of Oriental Studies London
XXIV	P & App M G Ph G Ch G	Oxford	Mays I 1 Nat Sc II (1) Exh Sc
XXV	Eng G Fr G // Ger P Lat G	Choral Sch (1940)	
XXVI	Eng -/G Fr -/G (1941) Ch D/D Zoo D/D // Bot VG Fr P	Camb Exh Sc (1942)	Law (qualifying) II 2 Law I Sch and College Prize 1 Nat Sc II M.B. B. Chir Three Med Coll prizes for case histories and pathology 1 Nat Sc I 2 Nat Sc I Research Sch PhD
XXVII	Ch VG/G Biol D/D // Fr G Ger G (1942)	Camb	Mus B Stewart of Rannock Sch
XXVIII	Eng P/G Fr P/P // Lat G Mus VG	Sch Sc (1942)	
XXIX	Eng G/G Hist G/G // Fr F Lat VG	Camb	Mays II (1)
XXX	Hist D (1942) Fr G/G Hist D/D // Lat G Art VG (1942)	Exh Hist (1942) Camb	Degree not completed Hist Mays I 1 Mod Lang Ger I Fr II (1)
XXXI	Ch G/G Biol G // Fr G Ger G	Sch Hist (Dec. 1942)	
XXXII	Ch -/P Biol -/VG (1943)	Camb	1 Nat Sc II
XXXIII	Eng G/VG Fr P Hist G/G (1943)	Exh Sc (1943)	1 Eng II (1) 2 Eng II (11)
XXXIV	Pure M G App M G/G Phy G/P	+Camb	1 Nat Sc II
XXXV	Ch G/G Zoo G/G Bot P	Camb	1 Nat Sc II ((11) 2 Nat Sc II (11)
1943	Ph G/P Chem G/P // P Maths P	Camb	1 Nat Sc II (1) 2 Nat Sc I Research Sch
1944	App M P		

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What may one gain from an examination of this table?

(i) Prognostication has turned out to be reasonably good and has definitely improved over the years. There are some in the early part of the table who do not seem on paper to have proved that the award of a scholarship was fully justified. It may be stated, however, that some of those who only succeeded in gaining a third class honours degree have, in their subsequent careers, fully justified their university educations. In the latter part of the table prognostication may be said to be very good; a considerable proportion of the candidates gained first or good second class honours degrees. The improvement may be attributed, in part, to the greater experience of those making awards under this system, in part to the effects of the system on the education given in the school.

(ii) Though the number of those gaining high degrees is reasonably high, the number of those who were given distinction marks in the Higher Certificate is small. Failure to gain this mark did not, however, indicate that a candidate would not acquit himself well at university level. While Nos. IV, XXIII, XXVII, who ultimately reached first class honours standard, gained one or more distinctions in the Higher Certificate, Nos. XVI, XVII, XVIII, XIX, XXV, XXXV, who also gained first class honours degrees, had no mark higher than a G.

To what extent the ability to reach the D mark in the Higher Certificate indicates ability to gain a high honours degree is a matter worthy of a fuller inquiry. If it should be shown that a group of candidates given scholarship awards, either by the state or by a local authority, on the basis of this mark, did not do as well at university level as the candidates included in this table, the majority of whom gained nothing higher than a G, then two interesting conclusions might emerge, that high marks in the Higher Certificate do not necessarily indicate high achievement at the university and that the strain undergone at school to gain these high marks may have been detrimental to success at the university. There is a certain amount of evidence which points to the conclusion that some of those going up to universities have, owing to overstrain in their latter years at

## A WILTSHIRE EXPERIMENT

school, been squeezed dry before starting on their university careers.

Perhaps all that can be said with certainty here is that the Wiltshire method of award deliberately tends to avoid this danger of over pressure in order to win a scholarship, since scholarships are not awarded solely on academic performance, but on a full assessment of suitability to benefit from a university education. It is significant that, when recently I discussed a science candidate, who had been placed on the reserve list, with the Deputy Director of Education, there was no reference made to his standard, as shown in the Higher Certificate, in science. The Deputy Director was concerned with the standard of general all-round culture he had revealed in his essay paper and at the interview.

(iii) A number of those awarded L.E.A. scholarships also won open scholarships at Oxford or Cambridge, either before or after going up. The number may not be large when compared with the achievements in this field of some of the great English schools. It is, however, not discreditable to a grammar school, some 80 per cent of the members of which are elementary schoolboys.

What is, however, more significant is the blossoming out of some of those included in the list at the university stage. This blossoming was, I am convinced, due, at any rate in part, to the fact that the particular method of awarding scholarships encouraged an all-round, balanced education and the building up of the sort of culture which can only result when concentration can be on ultimate rather than immediate ends.

(iv) The variety of combination of subjects offered by candidates in the Higher Certificate is perhaps worthy of notice. It is clearly desirable to allow the maximum amount of choice in studies at the Sixth Form stage. One might, however, have felt it inexpedient, with a not very liberal staff ratio (during the greater part of the period under review it was between 21 and 22), to try to organize Sixth Forms with so great a variety of choices or to enter boys for so diverse combinations of subjects had scholarship awards depended on total marks gained in the

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**Higher Certificate.** Since that was not so, the possible risk in doing what was educationally desirable had not to be taken into account.

The beneficial effects of the Wiltshire procedure on the life and work of the school will be becoming clear. Since in these effects lies, I believe, its particular significance, it is desirable to expand more fully.

Perhaps the best way of putting it is to say that the particular procedure which Wiltshire evolved has not only resulted in the most worthy candidates for university education being selected, it has also conferred on Wiltshire grammar schools a measure of freedom under which, if they so wished, they could give a more liberal education than they would have been able to do had the method of scholarship award been less flexible and enlightened.

This freedom has operated in various ways. For instance, it has made the organization of the work of boys who wished to compete both for county scholarships and also for scholarships at Oxford and Cambridge much easier. Some authorities will only award scholarships on a complete Higher Certificate. That means that if, at his first try, a candidate is unsuccessful in gaining a scholarship, he must take the whole Higher Certificate again the following year. If the candidate also wants to compete for an open scholarship at Oxford or Cambridge, the strain imposed on him is very great, since he must work for the full Higher Certificate and the open scholarship at the same time. True, he can concentrate on work for an open scholarship, which, if he wins it, carries a county scholarship or its financial equivalent with it. But that, particularly for the less-talented candidate, involves the risk of falling between two stools. The flexible Wiltshire procedure allows any candidate, who has passed the Higher Certificate but not been given a scholarship, to offer only one subject, or, at most, two subjects, at his second attempt. He may, even though he is not successful, offer evidence from this open scholarship examination. Thus strain is reduced and his chances of winning an open scholarship increased. The boy from a Wiltshire grammar school is thus

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placed in a position of greater equality with the boy from an independent public school, who can afford to go up to a university on an open scholarship alone.

The report of the Secondary School Examinations Council on 'Examinations in Secondary Schools' has been published while this essay has been in process of preparation.<sup>1</sup> While the report does not deal with the award of scholarships, it envisages papers, in addition to those at ordinary and advanced level, of scholarship standard, for those competing for university scholarships. It is perturbing to find a group of headmasters seriously discussing the following as the conditions for the award of state scholarships:

To take *at one examination* either

- (i) Two subjects at scholarship level and two at ordinary level
- or (ii) Two subjects at scholarship level and one at advanced level
- or (iii) One subject at scholarship level, two at advanced level and one at ordinary level.

While it is true that, owing to the increased value of state and local authority scholarships, a poor boy can go up to Oxford or Cambridge on a state or local authority scholarship alone, without, in addition, winning an open scholarship or exhibition, the open scholarships of Oxford and Cambridge will still be the *blue ribands* of the scholarship field, carrying with them the highest honour. To gain one of them will, possibly, be the surest way of gaining admission to an Oxford or Cambridge college. Can there be fair competition between the rich and poor boy except under a system such as that which obtains in Wiltshire?

More important, however, than any one valuable feature is the fact that the Wiltshire method definitely strives to ensure that the candidates for its scholarships shall receive a balanced education, that the schools preparing them should aim at train-

<sup>1</sup> Ministry of Education: *Examinations in Secondary Schools*. (Published by H.M. Stationery Office, 1947.)

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ing an all-round type of boy or girl, cultured, with wide interests, self-reliant, socially aware and flexible in mind and spirit. The good school will, in any case, strive for this end; there is much to be said, however, for a system which makes the task easier.

The sceptical critic may argue that only the minority of boys in grammar schools reach the stage of competing for university scholarships. While that is true, it is also true that the needs of this important minority tend to influence the education of the rest. It cannot but be beneficial to the education of the school as a whole, particularly at Sixth Form level, that those abilities and qualities which may be regarded as true objectives for the many who will not go to universities are the same objectives towards which, to an even greater degree, the scholarship candidate must strive.

The critic may also argue that those aspects and activities of the school life which are conducive to growth in poise and responsibility, to increase in physical fitness and prowess and to the development of artistic and wide cultural interests, are independent of the conditions under which university scholarships are awarded. That is not, however, strictly true. Have not the standards demanded by the universities of those who would win science scholarships been a not irrelevant factor in that lack of general culture among science students, which the universities now deplore?

Though they were not the only factor, the conditions under which the Wiltshire local authority awarded its scholarships were one of the factors which made it possible for one headmaster to strive after culture and balance in the education of the school he served and to work out a highly differentiated Sixth Form curriculum, which has resulted in the number of those remaining at school after passing the School Certificate to enter on some form of advanced work rising from 11 in 1927 to nearly 50 at the present time.

It remains to state conclusions. They can only, on the evidence presented, be regarded as tentative. Though I am convinced of their validity, much more evidence than I have

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been able to adduce would be necessary definitely to establish them. They may be stated briefly as follows:

(i) That a system for awarding university scholarships on a broad basis such as that which Wiltshire has evolved has greater prognosticating value than when awards are made solely on the results of a written examination.

(ii) That the effects of such a system of award are highly beneficial to the life and culture of the school.

Such a system of award can, however, be only worked effectively when the unit of administration is comparatively small, so that there can be reasonably intimate contact between those making the awards and the schools presenting candidates. A highly centralized system is unlikely to be sufficiently flexible or be able to establish the necessary contacts on which the valid assessment of personal qualities depends.

All local authorities have not, in the past, been equally liberal in the award of scholarships. It has been possible for a boy living in one county area to be awarded a scholarship, while a boy of equal worth, living in another county area, has failed to get one. As a result, there are some who advocate, in order to secure greater equality, a greater degree of centralization. One ought to be wary of this solution. If my conclusions are correct, what may be gained in greater equality would be more than outweighed by loss in flexibility and reliability and in benefit to the life and culture of schools. Now that scholarships have become less competitive, less a struggle for a limited number of awards, more an assessment of suitability for university education, the chances of worthy candidates failing to gain awards has probably lessened. The experience gained from the Wiltshire experiment points to the desirability of an even greater degree of decentralization, of the majority of awards being made by local authorities rather than by the state.

## RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY





### XIII

#### AN AUTHOR AND HIS CRITICS

**H**. G. Wells had praised an earlier book of mine, *This Modern Age*, in which I had tried to do for the schoolboy what he, on a much greater scale, had, in *The Work, Wealth and Happiness of Mankind*, done for the adult. So, when my book, *Towards a New Aristocracy*, was published, I sent him a copy and asked him that he should give me his opinion of it.

He did not approve of it at all; indeed, in a long letter, he attacked, in no light fashion, the basic convictions which had impelled me to write the book. Out of that first letter a correspondence arose, which, on account of the issues it raised, I believe to be of some interest and which, since Mr. Wells was willing that it should not be kept private, I now print. The letters are printed exactly as they were written, except that I have omitted two short paragraphs in Mr. Wells' letters and one in my own, which were concerned with a purely personal matter.

#### H. G. WELLS TO F. C. HAPPOLD

6th September 1943.

Before the war you sent me a book, *This Modern Age*, expressing very attractive sentiments which I praised; this present book of yours is much more explicit and I find it altogether less admirable.

I find myself in entire disagreement with your attempt to paint and dress up the dear old Catholic Church again in a loose selection of pseudo-modern phrases. I am a monist, that is to say I do not find any reason for supposing that a human individuality, such as it is, is a thing made up of two ingredients,

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(1) matter and (2) soul and/or spirit. That idea, begotten of dreams and nightmares, belongs to the neolithic childhood of man. You seem to imagine it is still acceptable. And I find in your discourse a series of phrases, 'The Time Spirit' for example, and 'the essential genius of the English people', which correspond to nothing I have ever encountered in my life. And I am about as pure English (with a remote touch from the Ulster Neals) as anyone I know.

You seem never to have heard of Behaviourism—I wonder why. Surely Pavlov or even Watson would have been better authorities to study than Mr. Middleton Murry, A. C. F. Beales, or the oracular R. H. S. Crossman, of whom I hear for the first time in your book.

Now about this *élite*, this revamping of the Catholic Church. This is to be explicitly a *ruling class*, drawing its personnel from every rank of society, a controlling organization which will resume just that authoritarian self-defensive mentality that has always characterized the Church. But you misinterpret me when you represent me as insisting upon any such *élite*. You quote me as saying:

'For any revolutionary movement to succeed, there must be this core of special intelligence, of enlightened fanatics, so to speak, whose minds are liberated enough to imagine a new social order. And it is *no good their pretending* to be anything but what they are, the specialized backbone.'

But such a 'specialized backbone' is quite a different thing from a governing organization. Plainly I am saying that the men I have in mind, being instinct with the spirit of scientific research, *repudiate* any authoritative role whatever. This is the flat opposite of your ruling 'City of God'. They are an *élite* of service. They would no more dictate the 'path of Eternal Wisdom, the Way of the Cross', than the Royal Society would dictate the 'way' of research to truth. I pity a witty penetrating boy-sceptic with a turn for scoffing in this pseudo-modern school of yours.

The more I think over your ideas, based as they are on neolithic metaphysics, the more I realize how essentially your conception is the rehabilitation of the Catholic Church (High or

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Roman) in pseudo-modern garments. In the religious controversies between Protestant and Catholic that have raged in the past, it has been the custom for the Low Church people to identify your sort of Church *élite* with a figure in the book of Revelation called the Scarlet Woman or more vulgarly the Whore of Babylon. They seem to me, speaking as an outsider, to have rather the best of the dispute. Your '*élite* Church', in spite of the paint and powder and girlish skirts you have given her, seems just an attempt to recall that old Abomination. I have always found her odour of sanctity rather a nasty smell; she had bad teeth and her antiquated seductive tricks disgust me. You will have to shut your windows tight to preserve her odour of sanctity and keep out the gathering gale of clear thinking that is blowing about the world.

You may be interested in, but probably you will be too shocked to understand, the Thesis I enclose. It is for your private information, as it is under consideration for publication in the *Philosophical Transactions*. But later on when that matter is settled, I shall have no objection to Messrs. Christopher or Faber and Faber printing this correspondence in its entirety for the information of your supporters.

F. C. HAPPOLD TO H. G. WELLS

28th September 1943.

Forgive my being so long in answering your letter. The beginning of a new school year is a busy time for a headmaster.

Though you criticize my book adversely, I do not mind, for you do me the honour of taking it seriously. I much prefer to be attacked rather than to be praised uncritically. Moreover, your letter raises interesting issues. Putting aside talk of '*neolithic metaphysics*', with its question-begging epithet, and scarlet women and whores of Babylon, with which, since I was brought up a North Country Nonconformist, I am fully acquainted, I would like to comment on some of them.

It seems to me important to find out whether there is any bridge between humanists like yourself who can acknowledge

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no reality beyond that of the material world, and those who, like myself, are both Christian and humanist and who, while fully acknowledging the authority of scientific method in its own sphere, also accept as valid a non-time-space reality which cannot be apprehended or 'proved' by the methods appropriate to the study of the physical world. I should not be surprised if you replied 'No'. In one of your recent books, I think it was *Phoenix*, you thundered, in a way which would have done credit to Tertullian, against those who departed one jot or tittle from what you considered to be the true faith. On one page you seemed to be calling down anathemas on those you regard as heretics as fervently as any bishop at the Council of Constantinople.

You accuse me of revamping the Catholic Church. True, I admire and respect much in Catholic Christianity, but I utterly reject the claim of any individual or organization to hold anything but a fraction of truth. The most deadly of all the deadly sins is, I believe, the sin of pride, and it is a sin into which a Church is particularly liable to fall. The results are evident in history; inquisitions, heresy hunts, religious wars, opposition to any new aspect of truth, lust of power. And I should argue that there is no form of tyranny worse than a tyranny which bases itself on theological sanctions. While I should consider it unwise to regard as necessarily invalid what men of the past have regarded as wisdom, like you I believe in perpetually increasing and resurgent truth. I should certainly not dream, nor would any *élite* that I conceive of dream, of dictating the path of the Eternal Wisdom, the Way of the Cross. For one thing, I know it would be completely ineffective.

You question the desirability of the sort of *élites* I envisage because they would be in danger of assuming 'just that authoritarian self-defensive mentality that has always characterized the Church'. That danger has always been present in my own mind. It is not only a Church, however, which is in danger of that particular authoritarian self-defensive mentality. It is common to every form of society, lay as well as ecclesiastical. I drew attention to this fact on page 33; scientists have not been always

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free of it. Moreover, the 'odium scientificum', though perhaps not so common as the 'odium theologicum', has not been always absent. I seem to remember that Pasteur, for instance, had some pretty hard things said of him by the scientists of his day.

In the present state of man's mind it is doubtful whether it can be entirely eliminated but I agree with you that it must be the function of education to try. If you will read my perhaps idealized description (on pages 112 and 113) of the *élites* I envisage, you can hardly accuse me of desiring to bring into being people with a self-defensive mentality. You are right, however, in drawing attention to the danger; it is a very real one.

Your idea—it appears in several of your books—of *élites* which repudiate any authoritative role won't do. I refer to two sorts of *élites*, which I have called *directive* and *permeating élites* (see page 27). The quotation from *All Aboard for Ararat* referred primarily to the latter, which would not assume an authoritative role. But in the present state of the world *directive élites*, which would necessarily have to assume authority, are surely essential. I do not see how the creator of Mr. Tauler can deny that. Saint Augustine said 'Love and do what you like'. Were all men good enough and wise enough there would be no need of what the theologians call 'Law'. But they are not. *Élites* which repudiate any authoritarian role would be serving the world very ill. Unless the right people are willing to wield power, the wrong people will do so. Several times in my book I have drawn attention to this fact. It is surely obvious from the events of our time; failure to appreciate it has been one cause of our undoing.

There is a gathering gale of clear thinking blowing about the world. There are some signs that it is blowing away from that particular sort of thought techniques which has been more and more common since the Renaissance. These may turn out to be only temporary, merely modes of thinking conditioned by a particular group of developments, in no way permanent. That I do not quote Watson and Pavlov does not mean that I have never heard of them. Indeed I have found the behaviourist thesis of great empirical value in dealing with juvenile delinquents. But I am afraid I am not prepared to regard any

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scientific group as a sort of Twentieth Century General Council. Moreover, why you should think your Thesis should shock me I cannot imagine. I read it with great interest as I read everything you write as soon after publication as I can get hold of it.

As to the 'witty penetrating boy-sceptic in my pseudo-modern school', he is allowed to, and does, say exactly what he likes. Most of my own boys regard what I have called the 'religio-scientific' approach as a useful one. Indeed one of my most competent scientists recently read a paper on 'Mind' to his companions which took the form of an exposition of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity as an effective description of the working of a creative intelligence in the universe.

I may be all wrong; and in that quotation from the *Phaedo*, with which the book ends, I meant exactly what I said. If I am deceiving myself resist me lest others too may be deceived. But I would have you believe that the book is an attempt to state the truth as far as I can see it. The amusing thing would be if the defenders of what you call the dear old Catholic Church should go for me as hard as you have. I should not be surprised if they do.

Do write to me again.

Some days after September 28th, when my first letter was written, I had sent Mr. Wells a copy of a form of service I had drawn up for the School Company of Honour and Service, which I felt might make clearer the sort of *élites* I envisaged.<sup>1</sup>

At the top of his letter of October 4th, which follows, Mr. Wells wrote in pencil: 'This letter was written before I got your last communication', and at the end:

'The "spirit" of your later communication is quite parallel with my own thinking but I take matters in the reverse direction. I *begin* with the hard and pitiless inquiry into fundamentals. Then I take up this Pauline theology of yours and examine it relentlessly—you get the result in *Crux Ansata*. You swallow Trinitarian theology lock, stock and barrel and then think within its limitations.

<sup>1</sup> This is printed as part of another essay in this book, pp. 167-171.

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'There is a little piece of writing I circulate among a few friends which I think you may be interested to read. I have a great respect and affection for Jesus of Nazareth and no use whatever for the Lord Jesus Christ, only begotten Son of the Father, etc. It is called the *Happy Turning*. Will you return it carefully if I send it to you.'

H. G. WELLS TO F. C. HAPPOLD

4th October 1943.

We vary so much in our fundamental ideas that I do not think we can get much beyond defining our differences. You say that when I write of neolithic metaphysics I am using a question-begging epithet. I am doing nothing of the sort. The idea that there is a distinction between matter and spirit (with which soul and ghost are closely entangled) belongs to the childhood of mankind. Your mind is saturated with the idea that there is something called matter and something of a higher order which is not matter, of which I deny the existence. You think of me as a 'materialist'. The word 'materialist' begs the whole question because it implies the 'non material' as something denied. But there is a quite considerable literature of monism in which this childish assumption of a two-faced universe is set aside. You have got this queer inconsistent melange of stuff called Christianity in your mental bones. You start with that and nothing that I can say will ever induce you in mid career to drop it. I will look up *Phoenix* to find where I 'thundered' after the fashion of Tertullian against those who departed by one jot or one tittle from 'the true faith'. But occasionally, as disaster gathers ever more swiftly over the world, one may feel a certain perhaps unjust impatience with the quiet determination of the Faithful to wreck the world rather than think hard about fundamental things. You twit me with the dissensions of scientific men. But the difference between the world of scientific thought, as we call it nowadays (though the Royal Society called its publication the *Philosophical Transactions*) is that there is no 'directive elite' in the scientific world



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to give a permanent bias to its provisional findings. And about Power. Power does not exist to enforce Law. Law exists to control Power, and the better the Law and the better the education, the less need is there for militancy and bossing. If you will read *Crux Ansata* you will see that there was no fixed Christian creed until Nicaea.

F. C. HAPPOLD TO H. G. WELLS

9th October 1943.

I wanted to read *Crux Ansata* before replying to your last letter. But the Salisbury bookshops could not produce a copy outright, so I have had to order it, and I do not know when it will arrive.

I wonder how deep the variation in our fundamental ideas is? In the world of here and now we are aiming at much the same things. The spirit of the service I prepared for my boys you say is quite parallel to your own thinking. We both accept the principle of the need of an *élite*, of an inner dedicated core; we both think in terms of an *élite* which is not a dominating *élite* with a self-defensive mentality but essentially an *élite* of service and free inquiry. You would probably say that the essentially Christian *élite* I envisage cannot free itself of that self-defensive mentality which is characteristic of most secular as well as ecclesiastical organizations, that it is bound to think in chains. I acknowledge the danger but do not think it would be necessarily so. One can only decide by experiment, an experiment I am making.

It is true that we begin differently, due to the different ways we have been conditioned by circumstance and environment. If I read your story aright, as you have told it in your books, your awakening was through your contact with scientific thought. I awoke from my rather rigid Puritanism through poetry and experiences which I now know were akin to those described by the religious mystics.

You can tell me that these experiences were subjective, and I cannot prove you wrong. I can only reply that the whole body

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of mystical literature, which, incidentally, few bother to read, constitutes, so it seems to me, evidence for the possibility of planes of existence and experience outside those normally explored and mapped, and that I may, without violating my reason, make the adventure of faith.

I would also add that I feel bound to be on my guard against accepting the present mental climate and current thought techniques as alone admissible and valid, since they may be merely a result of a particular stage of development and represent only a passing phase in the development of human thought.

You must not think that I have swallowed Trinitarian theology like a sort of oyster. It is true that I can speak of Jesus of Nazareth as Very God and Very Man; but I am fully conscious that, in doing so, I am using a phrase which is intellectually incomprehensible, my first half is, of its essence, infinite and indefinable. I cannot intellectually comprehend that which I call God; I can only describe Him in symbols, and they do seem a queer, inconsistent melange of stuff until you see what they are driving at. But so does an equation in the higher mathematics. And modern physics seems to be revolving in a thought world just as intangible. Do you know the writings of Nicholas of Cusa, the first of the medievals, I think, to state the doctrine of popular sovereignty and a man of definitely scientific mind? He argues that human thought can only go a certain way; to get further it must enter into a state of what he calls 'docta ignorantia', learned ignorance, which involves an abandonment of previous thought-techniques in order that a further step can be made. I have heard it said that his mode of thinking anticipates that of Einstein.

I can understand your impatience with much that passes for Christianity, with the habit of many Christians to dig in their heels and resist all advances of human thought. The habit is not confined to Christians. And if you are convinced that the Faithful (whom you ought to define) are determined to wreck the world, you are bound to attack and resist them. It was necessary to liquidate the orthodox Church, at any rate temporarily, in order to carry through the Russian Revolution. I believe, how-

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ever, there is much in the quotation from Victor Gollancz which I printed in my book:

'If selfishness is to be controlled, men and women must be associated for another purpose, for the preservation and development of what, if the shorthand will be permitted, may be called the Christian tradition.'

If you want a label for me, call me a neo-Erasmian. As a historian you will understand what I mean. I could write quite a good modern version of the *Praise of Folly*. But I should still remain a true son of the Church.

I should be honoured if you would allow me to read the *Happy Turning*. I will promise to return it.

I cannot get everything I want to say in a letter; but this must suffice for now, though I have only written of one of the several points you have raised.

P.S.—I confess to using the words 'spiritual' and 'material' too loosely and so giving the impression that I assume a 'two faced universe'. Actually I do not; nor, incidentally, did Jesus; the whole of His teaching on the Kingdom of Heaven assumes a unity in the universe—'the Kingdom of Heaven is within you'.

What I do assume are planes and degrees of consciousness (if a Behaviourist will permit the word) outside normal sense perceptions.

This conception is fundamentally different from that of a ghost or soul housed in a body, which you rightly say belongs to the childhood of the race. To appreciate it at all involves a high degree of development.

After a few days the typescript of the *Happy Turning* arrived—it has since been published—and I read it with a good deal of interest and appreciation, not for its picture of Jesus, which as an imaginative reconstruction I definitely disliked, but for the light it threw on the mind of H. G. Wells himself. There seemed to be a sort of pathos about it, a sense of dissatisfaction with the intellectual position which had dominated his life and writing and yet a refusal to abandon or modify it. The following letter accompanied its return.

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F. C. HAPPOLD TO H. G. WELLS

20th October 1943.

It is kind of you to let me read *Happy Turning*. But I don't like your portrait of Jesus of Nazareth. To get it you had to leave so much out and to twist so much round.

And you are unfair to Paul. He seems to have been a pretty brave man and he could not help trying to put his experiences into the pattern of his own contemporary thought. Some of his writing is lovely stuff. He was not responsible for what you are really inveighing against, the stratification of vivid thought and experience into a system of dogmatic theology, which assumes that it is final, or into an intolerant organization which maintains that it and it alone has the key to the truth. That all came much later. It may not be exactly true to say that there was no fixed creed before Nicaea, but it is near enough. And it is clear from a study of the Early Church why it happened. The finest minds in the Church tried to avoid it and failed.

Much of the book I liked. Your escape from hell fire theology was similar to my own, but I escaped through a different gate. And I liked the end chapters, though you left your conclusion (or seemed to do) on a note of interrogation. I wanted you to write more of this demand for 'an undefinable, unlimited something beyond space and time altogether'.

I have my own interpretation; but even from the point of view of practical 'here and now' planning one must take account of it. Your brand of Stoicism, against which a part of you clearly rebels, is not for popular consumption. In an earlier letter you speak of your impatience with the Faithful, who you think will wreck the world. But so may you, and even more effectively. Few men can endure an empty universe. Remove the myth, undermine faith and you release the daemons. You can see it in what is happening now; Nazism, at any rate in part, springs out of the resulting despair.

I have my own Happy Turning dream. It is of a world in which men have found the key to a new dialectic, in which the thought of the scientist and the thought of the saint are har-

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monized and made one, a 'gathering into one thing earthly and heavenly'. There would be no intolerant Church, of the sort you so much hate, there; for men would have at last come to recognize that finality can never be reached, that the principle of research must operate in religion as in science, that dogmatic theology (there must be dogmatic theology) can never be more than an interim statement. It may happen like that.

I agree with you about sycamores, at any rate in confined spaces. I have one and it scattered itself into my compost heap. The beastly things are coming up among my vegetables, in my herbaceous border, anywhere. Damn 'em.

The correspondence closed with a short letter in Wells' own handwriting; the others had been typed:

23rd October 1943

DEAR MR. HAPPOLD,

I think we have defined most of our differences now. Paul is the rock on which we split. I must leave you to him I see.

With all my best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

H. G. WELLS.

We had defined our differences; we could do no more. On our conception of the nature of the necessary *élites* we had come close together; on fundamentals we remained far apart.

The issue was one which many are now forced to face, the issue between 'theocentric' and 'anthropocentric' humanism, whether man is his own centre or whether, within and beyond him, is something other than and different from himself. It is the fundamental question which modern man has got to decide.

I cannot resist a postscript. I ended my first letter to H. G. Wells with these words: 'The amusing thing would be if the defenders of what you call the dear old Catholic Church should go for me as hard as you have. I should not be surprised if they do.' It was a true prophecy. In January 1944 a review of *Towards a New Aristocracy* appeared in *Blackfriars*, under the

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signature of Kenelm Foster, O.P. Omitting the first few sentences, it read as follows:

'The book is in three parts: Diagnosis, Experiment, Possibilities. The diagnosis comes to this: society is chaotic and largely decadent—hence Hitler, the revolt of the "undermind", anti-democracy. Democracy is "passive" (the sum of civil rights and liberties) and "active" (the participation in representative government). Passive democracy is a priceless heritage; but active democracy must adapt itself to changed conditions. "Mass democracy" cannot cope with modern horrors (it is one). We need a new aristocracy, a new "*élite*".

'*Élites* are either "directive" or "permeating" and the latter fills the ranks of the former. And the modern educator must try to fill the ranks of the latter. He supplies the permeators.'

It is not an exact or complete summary of my argument; but it does not matter. The review continues:

'"Experiment" describes the author's twenty years' effort to do this: a rather noble story of a flexible mind with very good intentions and dogged persistence. His warm and glowing enthusiasm for young human nature holds one's sympathy; despite the utter modernism of his religion. As a story its climax is the League of Honour and Service, a sort of modernist Grail (for boys) or Sodality, which Dr. Happold founded in 1935 at Bishop Wordsworth's School, Salisbury. This is his nucleus, his "order", his new aristocracy which is to permeate England: a little cohort of leaders, of seers, of doers.

'What will they do? "Possibilities" does not tell you precisely. In a general way it argues for this type of aristocracy and this kind of training, it gropes into the future, it urges the Higher Christianity. I am not jeering. Dr. Happold really thinks that Christianity must get "higher" by passing beyond creed and dogma; and that then you can bring youth to the altar and dedicate it and sew the Cross of Sacrifice on its left shoulder (p. 69).

'Well, this is happening. It is a fact and a factor in our world, perhaps a growing one, perhaps dynamic. What shall I say? I put only three questions: (1) Granted an undogmatic "faith"

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in that "World of Being" from which moral values and the League of Service derive, will not intellect strive to *define* this "world"? (2) Can *human* energy persist at all if it does not define its absolutes, reach clarity of truth? (3) Can this be done except on a basis of dogmatic *credenda*? The history of European intellect suggests an answer.'

After the hammering H. G. Wells had given me, I found this review amusing. To be accused at the same time of trying to paint and dress up the Catholic Church in pseudo-modern garments and, still more, of attempting to *recall* 'that old Abomination', and also of being an utter modernist in religion and of urging something called Higher Christianity which, whatever it may mean, is not what most would label Roman Catholicism, is interesting. Perhaps, as a 'neo-Erasmian', I find in it a certain significance.

## XIV

### THE IDEA OF A COMPANY OF HONOUR AND SERVICE

**I** remember some years ago listening to a refugee from one of the European countries speaking at an educational conference. He spoke somewhat as follows: 'You English schoolmasters regard it as your only function to teach a boy how to think. You do not consider it is your duty to teach him what to think. The schoolmasters of the Germany of the Weimar Republic thought the same. They left the minds of the youth of Germany empty vessels; and Hitler knew what he wanted to pour in.'

There are still many who think that education can remain unbiased. They dread anything that smacks of propaganda or indoctrination. In many ways one sympathises with them.

Perhaps in a stable society, when a boy might be expected, as he grew up, unconsciously to absorb a sound religious and social philosophy from his environment, a concentration on the technique of clear thinking might be an effective education. In an unstable, chaotic world, a world which has lost its bearings and in which the old values have lost their power to hold the minds of men, such a course is dangerous. The boy will go out into a world where there are no such qualms. Politicians and newspaper proprietors will not hesitate to use all the subtle arts of propaganda to gain their ends. It is good that a boy should be trained to think clearly, to distrust the glib statement and the facile solution; such training will afford him some protection. It is, however, of itself not enough.

The world flounders for lack of a creed, strongly enough held to control action and to engender will. Powerful influences are



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present which, if they become predominant, may overthrow those values which have, up to now, directed Western Civilization. It is no longer possible for the schoolmaster to be neutral; he must come down on the side of a Christian civilization or a pagan one; he must decide between a 'theocentric' Christian humanism or that 'anthropocentric' humanism which has, with so disastrous results, become increasingly dominant in the modern world. Many find alien the apparent theological hair-splitting of the Athanasian Creed; but that much-maligned and misunderstood clause, 'which faith, unless a man keep pure and undefiled, he shall without doubt perish everlastingly', enshrines a sound, psychological truth.

I would not be misunderstood. There must always be a certain objectivity in our teaching. I am not arguing here for the indoctrination of some rigid body of Christian dogma in the school; I am, however, asserting that the school must take sides for or against a Christian civilization, and, for that reason, that it must, though there are limitations in how this should be done, teach the boy what to think, not only how to think. The first and most important duty of the school is to give its pupils the material which will enable them to lay the sure foundation of a creed, a view of life, a scale of values.

But how? The majority of children leave school too early to enable anything more than the merest foundations being laid. It is to be hoped that the projected County Colleges will take as their objective something more definite than the training of that hazy person, 'the good citizen'. Even with those who leave grammar schools at the age of 16 only small beginnings are possible. The bigger opportunity lies with those whose education is continued up to 17 or 18. Among this group is the intellectual cream of the community, that talented minority which, in fact, forms the directive core of the nation. The widest opportunities fall to the universities.

In this paper I am not concerned with those who leave school at 14 or 15 nor with those who go to places of higher education at 17 or 18. My main concern is with the grammar schools, though what may be said about them, will, to some extent,

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apply to the new secondary schools, when they attain their full stature.

The acquisition of a philosophy, which can embrace God, the universe and man is, in part, an intellectual process. Some teaching of Christian dogma there must be, even if only because it would be fatal to our purpose to educate the boy up to an adult standard in the science laboratory and to leave his theological education still at the childhood stage. The teaching of dogma is, however, difficult, not only because Christian theologians differ, but also because the material is much more intangible, much less objective, than that dealt with by the scientist. Further, the mind of the modern boy is much more attuned to the concepts of the integral calculus than to those of the Nicene Creed and one is at a disadvantage since one is not transmitting something generally held by the society to which the boy belongs. More than that, however much one may be convinced of the validity of those eternal truths which Christianity enshrines, one can only express those truths through the medium of word symbols. Wisdom and truth do not become old or out of date but words grow stale and lose their meaning. The Christian creeds were composed by men with a very different picture of the universe from ours. Their word-symbols were those of their own age; they can, for many, conceal rather than reveal the truths they enshrine.

Religion, someone has observed, is experience, not dogmatic theology. That is true. There are many truly religious people who would fail hopelessly in an examination on the intellectual basis of their faith. Indeed, as a great medieval contemplative wrote: 'By love may He be gotten and holden; by thought never.' God has, however, as Saint Thomas Aquinas asserted, given to men two windows opening on reality, reason and faith. It would be foolish not to appeal to a boy's reason, to neglect to attempt to give him a reasonable basis for a creed.

To reason soundly, however, demands stern intellectual training and, even at 17, the boy's mind is immature and undeveloped. So, though one may strive to lay the intellectual

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foundation on which a firmly held adult creed may be built, it would be unwise to rest there.

What we must try to do is make the school a vivid expression of a Christian Community, in the sense that T. S. Eliot uses that phrase, that is, a community in which all are not necessarily Christians but which is accustomed to think in Christian categories and the conduct of which is based on Christian values. That idea of the school as a Christian Community must be given outward form by the use of appropriate symbols, which will permeate its life and work and be the means through which the boy grows into the practice of Christian living, and the understanding of the Christian Faith. For revelation comes not only through thought and through those rare periods of vision and spiritual enlightenment, but also, and this to a great extent, through things, that is, through symbols.

There are some who, perhaps as a result of our Puritan heritage, are suspicious of the use of symbols. It must be acknowledged that the use of symbols with a religious significance needs care. To invent symbols needs both care and insight, for, to be effective, the symbols must be accepted without self-consciousness. Yet invention there may have to be and, if the right symbols are invented, after a short time, during which they will appear strange and be regarded with some measure of suspicion, they will become a part of a school's tradition and so be capable of naturally fulfilling their function.

This essay is concerned with the particular symbolism, designed to express the idea of the school as a Christian Community, and so to bring home to boys a scale of values and the creed on which they were based, worked out in one particular school. It became known as the Company of Honour and Service. It grew up gradually, evolving stage by stage, and, in course of time, fundamentally changing its original character.

The Company began as a result of my becoming increasingly perturbed, sometime after I became a headmaster, at the ignorance of so many boys leaving school of the basic facts about the society in which, as citizens of a democratic state, they were called to play a part. In few English schools was there then any

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definite education in the knowledge boys and girls needed even to start thinking about the problems on which, as voters, they were expected to form judgements. They were being sent out into the world socially unaware and were thus likely to fall a prey to any silver-tongued charlatan with a glib remedy for the ills of the world. What might be called 'political' education seemed to me to be an essential duty of the school.

It became evident, however, after several years' experiment, that 'political' education, if confined to the intellectual plane, might easily result in the production of destructive critics, without any capacity for constructive thought or action, and without that sense of personal responsibility which was clearly needed. I became convinced that it was not sufficient merely to give knowledge and train the critical faculty, the desire and will to serve the community must also be aroused. It was out of that conviction that the Company of Honour and Service was conceived.

At the beginning mistakes were made. The Company was started as a voluntary organization, and failed completely. Boys of the middle school, who will join anything new, volunteered, the essential upper school held aloof. It was the five Senior Prefects of the School who were responsible for giving the Company an effective basis. It was they who suggested that it should be built up, not as a voluntary body, but as an elective one; that a boy should prove his worth before he became a member of it; that it should be not only a Company of Service but also a Company of Honour, to which it would be a privilege to belong.

It was decided to start the Company with some hundred and twenty boys. As a sign of membership a special uniform was designed, blue grey shirt, shorts and stockings, with a badge, a cross of sacrifice, surrounded by a wreath of honour, on the shirt. Members of the Company were not only expected to serve the school and the local community to the best of their ability, but also to undergo training to enable them to serve more effectively, in accordance with their particular individual abilities and tastes, both during and after schooldays. Courses of training and efficiency tests, the passing of which entitled a boy to

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efficiency medals, were worked out. They were not made easy; indeed they were deliberately made hard. They have, through all the changes which have taken place, remained. In order to gain an efficiency medal, not only had a boy to prove that he had skill above the average, but also that he could use that skill for a social end.

Perhaps the most successful of these efficiency tests was that for Physical Training Leaders. It was built round the normal physical education in the school. To gain the medal takes about two years' special training; the announcement of week-end courses for Voluntary Youth Leaders was greeted by boys who had trained for these tests with somewhat ribald mirth. The candidate for the medal must not only be an expert gymnast, he must also be able to take a class in both rhythmic and recreational exercises, as well as have some knowledge of elementary hygiene and anatomy. Above all, he must prove himself to be absolutely safe and reliable. Training is incorporated into the physical education work of the school. Boys who have reached the School Certificate and Sixth Form stage have a certain number of private study periods in school hours. If they wish to train as P.T. Leaders, two private study periods a week may be given to working with the Master of Physical Education; there are thus usually some of these P.T. Leaders in training working with him during the classes he takes with younger boys.

These P.T. Leaders have more than proved their worth and ability. They have successfully run classes of recreational gymnastics at clubs and other institutions; there is a record of one who even took on a class of young ladies. They particularly proved their value during a term when the Master of Physical Education was totally incapacitated by an accident. Four trained leaders and twelve boys in training took over the whole of the physical education of the school. The school's liability for accidents necessitated that parents should first be informed and given an opportunity to withdraw their sons from physical training classes; only one did so. There was no deterioration of standard, there were no problems of discipline; and, though work with apparatus was continued, the only accident was one

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to a P.T. Leader in training who, while waiting for a class to assemble, tried to do an advanced vaulting exercise which he ought not to have attempted alone.

Other tests and medals cover drama, music, scouting, swimming and various forms of craftsmanship, while, in addition, there were two Company awards, the Distinguished Service Award and the Company Service Award, which may be given for outstanding service and devotion of any sort to the school. Within the Company are Craftsmen's Guilds, consisting of boys elected on proved skill; on them the school has a special call when any particular piece of work has to be done.

When, in the autumn of 1938, it was decided to form a half squadron in the newly inaugurated Air Defence Cadet Corps, a new and separate organization was not set up. The half squadron was formed as part of the Company and, until the formation of the Air Training Corps, into which it was merged as a Foundation Squadron, wore Company uniform on parade.

It may be said that all this seems to have little relevance to the idea of the school as a Christian Community. Though that would be only half true, for efficient, practical service is certainly one element in Christian ethics, nevertheless, if it were all, little more could be claimed than that reasonably effective techniques for training in abilities which have a social use had been discovered. It is necessary to tell how the pattern of the Company developed from its first beginning.

It started as an elected body of some one hundred and twenty out of a school of between three hundred and fifty and four hundred boys, wearing a special uniform and a special badge, membership of which implied willingness to serve the school and the community and to train for social ends. The first problem which arose was that of the younger boy. He would not be likely to secure election to the Company until a later age, yet might wish to indicate his desire to serve. To meet the needs of the younger boy a voluntary organization, called Pioneers, was started. It was not particularly successful and was, indeed, not in accordance with what we came to realize was our real objective.

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What we were struggling towards did not become clear until the Company had been in existence some years, when we found ourselves in a dilemma. For it became increasingly obvious that the things we regarded as binding on members of the Company were equally binding on all boys, in virtue of their membership of the school, whether they belonged to the Company or not. That being so, the existence of a Company seemed to be unnecessary. We were convinced, however, that the Company had had, in fact, a profound and beneficial influence on the school; to abolish it would be to lose something of great value.

To resolve this dilemma we had to think out our conception afresh, to find a new pattern. What we eventually arrived at may be expressed as follows:

The Company should be thought of as the whole school; every boy admitted to the school was *potentially* a member and its values were binding on him in virtue of his membership of the school. He was, however, only *potentially* a member; before he could be *formally* elected it was necessary that he should have proved his worth, that he should have shown by his actions and attitude that he was prepared to accept those values for which a school, conceived as a Company of Service, stood. It would be expected that all boys would sooner or later secure election, some early in their school careers, some not until later. Among the ordinary members of the Company, some, however, would stand out above the rest; they would be a sort of aristocracy, the peculiar guardians of the school's traditions. To these should be given a special status, carrying with it particular honour and wider responsibilities.

It was in accordance with this conception that the Company assumed its final definite form, which has continued and increased in strength up to the present time. With very few exceptions all boys are ultimately given election to the Company. As a symbol of their attainment they are entitled to wear the Company badge, a silver cross on a blue ground, above the breast pocket of the blazer.

The highest grade of the Company is known as the Sixty, the number to which, at any one time, it is limited. Election to this

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grade lies with the Headmaster, the Vice Master, the Head of the School and the four Senior Prefects and is carried out with the greatest care. To be elected is regarded by boys as a high honour. In general the obligations implied in the acceptance of election are lived up to; only very occasionally have boys been suspended or degraded by the Head of the School and the Senior Prefects, who alone have this right, though the Headmaster may suggest that a boy who, in his opinion, has proved himself unworthy of his position should no longer be allowed to retain it. The insignia of the Sixty, which is solemnly given in chapel at a special service, is a scarlet cross of sacrifice, surrounded by a bronze wreath of honour, worn on the left breast.

I am aware that to some all this will be alien. Will it not, they might say, create nasty, self-righteous little prigs? The answer is that in practice it does not, nor has there been, from the very beginning, any sign that it might do so. Is it not very 'undemocratic'? Democracy has so many meanings that it is difficult to give a reply. In another place I have argued that, unless a democratic community can throw up an aristocracy, it is unlikely to survive. The pattern and idealism of the Company does frankly express the aristocratic principle, that talent and worth should be recognized and honoured and that authority should reside in those able to exercise it beneficently and efficiently. That particular expression of the aristocratic principle is not, however, alien to true democracy. Indeed, its acknowledgment has been always present in democracy as it has developed in England and has, more than anything else, given it strength and permanence.

But why all this elaborate symbolism of grades of worth, of insignia, of medals? Is not this alien to the nature of most boys? Is it not all rather absurd? The attitude of the English to symbols, particularly religious symbols, is an amusing study. Their inherited Puritanism, perhaps also their self-consciousness, make them distrustful of their use. Yet, in their hearts, they love ritual, colour and symbols, all of which are natural things to love and use. They must, however, have accepted associations. A man who will vehemently condemn a priest who celebrates the Holy Eucharist in coloured vestments will happily wear



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'vestments', which are, in principle, the same, at his Masonic Lodge. Everything depends on whether, allowing for a period of strangeness and even scepticism when it is first introduced, any particular symbol is accepted by the boy as natural and fitting.

I am convinced that, if we wish to impress on the boy's mind that certain values and virtues are admirable and should be cultivated, we cannot find a better way than by enshrining them in symbol. It is certainly a better and more effective method, and more psychologically sound, than preaching. And after all are we not simply extending what is already common custom in other fields? Do we not express our admiration of athletic prowess by awarding a tasselled cap, our admiration of academic excellence by presenting a calf-bound prize? And hereby do we not impress values on the boy's mind, which often remain with him after he has left school? And are these values always the most admirable ones?

If this is all, it may be still objected, there is no justification in maintaining that the Company expresses, in any real sense, the idea of the school as a *Christian Community*.

When, more than ten years ago, the Company of Honour and Service was first started, it was impossible to give it more than a humanistic basis, the ideal of the good citizen, accepting his social responsibilities and playing his full and effective part in the life of the community. To have made its basis deliberately Christian would have been to court failure; the mental climate of the school, though a religious foundation, and of the world outside its walls, forbade it. Slowly and gradually, however, a change took place, a change in the attitude of the senior boys of the school, a change in the mental climate of the outside world, due to the realization by many thinking people of the failure of what Jacques Maritain has called 'anthropocentric humanism'. The Company took on, more and more, a religious basis and significance.

That is not to say that it came to be regarded as an instrument for the creation of practising Christians in the orthodox sense or that an open acceptance of the Christian Faith was a

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condition of membership. Its essential nature precludes a grammar school from envisaging its function as the creation of practising Christians; it can never be a Community of Christians. It can be, and, I am convinced, ought to aim at being, a Christian Community. In this way it may play a vital part in the salving of civilization and the rebirth of a vigorous and influential Christendom. If it strives to prepare the soil aright, the rest it may leave to the operation of the Holy Spirit.

By a process of natural development the Company became a vivid and workable expression of this idea of the school as a Christian Community. It came to be regarded as natural and appropriate that a newly elected member of the Sixty should receive the insignia of his honour, kneeling before a lighted altar, during a service in the School Chapel, in which the beliefs and values on which the Company was based were expressed.

So that what the Company came to stand for may be clear, this service is printed in full.

### THE INTROIT

*sung by the Choristers of the Chapel*

They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

### THE READING

*read by the Prefect of Chapel*

JESUS, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he came forth from God, and goeth unto God, riseth from supper, and layeth aside his garments; and he took a towel, and girded himself. Then he poured water into the basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.

So when he had washed their feet, and taken his garments, and sat down again, he said unto them, 'Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord; and ye say well; for so I

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am. If I then, the Lord and the Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.'

(St. John xiii.)

Whosoever would become great among you shall be your minister; and whosoever would be first among you shall be servant of all. For verily the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

(St. Mark x.)

### THE RECOLLECTION *spoken by the Headmaster*

HAVE this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who being in the form of God, counted it not a prize to be on an equality with God, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross.

(Philippians ii.)

### *spoken by the Head of the School*

LET us remember that to which we are called.

WE are called to make our minds alert and keen and our bodies supple and strong that we may use them in the service of our fellowmen.

WE are called to the complete surrender of ourselves, to give all and to ask nothing in return.

WE are called to the perpetual search for truth, to the pursuit of knowledge, to humility, and to perfect charity.

WE are called to the following of the Christ, which is the life of selfless dedication and sacrifice.

THEREFORE let us dedicate ourselves anew to the high service of the King of Heaven, trusting not in our own strength but in the strength of Christ, our Leader, who put off his celestial glory that he might become the Redeemer of all.

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### THE DEDICATION HYMN

*sung by all present*

O God, of earth and heaven the King,  
Lord of all life and joy and love,  
From whom grace, truth and beauty spring,  
In whom all creatures live and move,  
Not in the feebleness of age  
But while my limbs are strong and free,  
Thy work to do, thy war to wage,  
My body, Lord, I offer thee.

My brain make nimble, keen and clear,  
Fit instrument of mental fight;  
Purge it alike of hate and fear;  
Illumine with thine own pure light.  
Wisdom of God, O make me wise,  
To follow truth where'er it be;  
Give me, Lord, understanding eyes,  
And knowledge, with humility.

To thee I consecrate my soul;  
Keep it, O Master, clean of sin;  
Each impulse of my will control;  
Shine, O celestial Light, within.  
Spirit of Christ, direct my ways  
And seal me with thy love's impress,  
That I may serve thee all my days  
And walk with thee in holiness.

Thou art in all things. Energy,  
Wisdom and Holiness thou art;  
Dwell thou in every part of me,  
Possess my head, my hands, my heart.  
In me set up thy secret shrine,  
Wherein thy voice alone is heard,  
Lit by the radiance divine,  
The temple of the Incarnate Word.

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*After which are said these prayers:*

LORD JESUS, who by thy life on earth and by the sacrifice of thyself on the Cross of Calvary, hast given to us a pattern of selfless devotion, enable us to follow to the uttermost the example which thou hast set us; and let not any weaknesses of our nature hinder us from giving to thee the loyal service which is thy due; for thy Name's sake. AMEN.

MAKE us, O Lord, the instruments of thy will. Where there is hatred let us bring understanding; where there is despair let us bring hope; where there is suffering let us bring relief; where there is discord let us bring harmony; where there is ignorance let us bring knowledge; and may our souls, our minds and our bodies be dedicated entirely and absolutely to thy service. AMEN.

FINALLY let us sum up our petitions in the prayer which Christ himself has taught us:

The Lord's Prayer.

THE HYMN OF A COMPANY OF SERVICE  
*sung by all present*

A wind has blown across the world,  
And tremors shake its frame;  
New things are struggling to their birth  
And naught shall be the same.  
The earth is weary of its past,  
Of folly, hate and fear;  
Beyond a dark and stormy sky  
The dawn of God is near.

A wind is blowing through the earth,  
A tempest fierce and strong;  
The trumpets of the Christ, the King,  
Thunder the skies along;

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The summons to a high crusade,  
Calling the brave and true  
To find a lost Jerusalem  
And make the world anew.

God, give us grace to play our part,  
The flag of Christ unfurled,  
In the healing of the nations,  
The redemption of the world.  
And let us build in England  
A land at last made free,  
Where men may serve their fellowmen  
And so win liberty.

The Christ shall walk in English ways,  
With eyes that burn like flame,  
And lips that curve in tenderness,  
To take away our shame.  
This is the vow that we have sworn:  
Whate'er our loss or pain,  
Christ shall be King in England  
And God alone shall reign.

### THE DISMISSAL *spoken by the Headmaster*

Go forth in the strength of Christ Victorious; have faith and fear not; do justly; love mercy and walk humbly with God; and may the spirit of the Lord Jesus be in your hearts.

There may be some who would question whether the conception of a school as a Christian Community—it goes far beyond the statutory Act of Worship of the Education Act and the colourless compromise of an Agreed Syllabus—is a legitimate one. They may argue that admission to a grammar school, or indeed to most other schools, is based on secular considerations and that the function of the school must thus remain primarily secular. Even those who accept the idea of the school as

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a Christian Community may feel that the effort to express and attain it through the sort of Company of Honour and Service which has been described is psychologically and educationally unsound.

This feeling was clearly evident when, in 1939, and the following years, I tried to extend the influence of what I called 'The Company of Service Plan' by founding a Federation of Companies of Service among other independent and state grammar schools. I wrote pamphlets and articles; I sent off innumerable letters; I circulated bulletins. I blush to think of the amount I wrote and the number of people I worried. Compared with the amount of labour expended, however, the results were small. A federation of some fourteen or so schools was formed. Many people were interested, a good number even sympathetic, but few were prepared to take any definite action. It may be that I did not make clear what was in my mind; there was a tendency to regard the Company of Service Plan as an attempt to start a sort of new super-Scout movement. It may be that the idea of a federation was wrong; English schools are very individualistic, and headmasters and headmistresses are plagued with innumerable appeals to join this organization or that. There was certainly a natural reluctance to launch out on anything fresh at a time when the war was piling on schools ever-increasing tasks and obligations.

Beneath and beyond everything else, however, lay something more fundamental. The whole conception of the Company was alien to long-established English school idealism and custom; for it deliberately set out to make conscious what had always been regarded as best left unconscious. English schools have assumed that the boy will naturally, without anything being said about them and without any deliberate attempt at instilling them, absorb right values from the tone and atmosphere of his school. What I had done, and was attempting to do on a wider scale through the Federation, was, implicitly at any rate, based on the conviction that that belief was no longer valid. The significance or otherwise of everything I have said in this essay turns on whether I was right or wrong.

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The issue is examined in a letter, written to me by the late Archbishop Temple, shortly before his death, after reading my book, *Towards a New Aristocracy*, in which I included, in much shorter form, the story I have told more fully here.

'When I first heard of the Company', he wrote, 'I was interested but anxious. It was part of the strength of the nineteenth-century Public Schools that they did that side of their work unconsciously and I feared the effect of making it conscious. But (1) the urgency of these times makes it necessary to move as quickly as we can and unconscious adaptations are liable to be slow even when they come at all; and (2) of course Arnold's aim was perfectly conscious. It is true that Arnold's pupils were regarded at the university as prigs (see Clough's Epilogue to *Dipsychus* for what their uncles thought of them), but if they were it was the necessary price of the later Public School in which Arnold's ideals were indigenous and could therefore be operative without self-consciousness. A hundred years after his death we have to do for a new generation whatever is the right analogue of what he did for his.'

Everything that has been written is based on the conviction that what Archbishop Temple wrote in that last sentence is true. In this essay I have tried to describe how one school attempted to find 'the right analogue', working in accordance with its own particular life and ethos.

A Company of Honour and Service may, however, take many forms; if it is to succeed it must evolve out of the life and thinking of the community it expresses. But that it is essential that something which one may describe by the generic name of a Company of Honour and Service, whatever the form it takes, and whatever the symbols it uses may be, should spring up, not only in schools, but also in clubs, factories, perhaps even in churches, indeed wherever there may be a sufficiently closely-knit community, I am convinced. For only by some such open and deliberate attempt at re-creation within numerous small groups can one hope to bring to rebirth that greater thing, Christendom.



## XV

### SOCIAL STUDIES AT SIXTH-FORM LEVEL

The term 'Social Studies' has acquired a number of meanings. In the title to this study I use it as a not very satisfactory phrase to describe that synthesis of school subjects, English, History and Geography, together with elementary Politics and Economics, which may be with advantage treated as a single element in the curriculum and, at the stage of Basic Culture, taught as a unity to any particular group by the same teacher. The theory and techniques of this Social Studies synthesis (or, as it is now designated, the English subjects synthesis) I have described in a number of books and articles which need not be considered here.<sup>1</sup>

At the Sixth-Form level Social Studies has, however, tended to assume a somewhat different character. Designated as S.S.P. (Social, Scientific and Philosophical Studies), it has developed into an attempt to give the adolescent boy, during the final stages of his school career, a picture of reality and a groundwork of philosophy, which may assist him in finding a creed satisfying to his adult mind.

Various methods of teaching Social Studies at the Sixth-Form level have been tried out during the course of the years. At first the approach was essentially humanistic, designed to train the boy in habits of clear, unbiased thinking and to give to him the basic knowledge necessary for a functioning citizen in a democratic community.

Under the stress of events, however, the approach has tended to become more philosophical, more theological, more religious. For the tragedy of our age is not primarily due to lack of

<sup>1</sup> I.e. in *The Approach to History and Citizens in the Making*, and in the essay, 'The Completion of an Experiment', in this volume, pages 65 seqq.

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knowledge, but to something much deeper, to a loss of values, to the breakdown of a faith, if you like, to the, at any rate temporary, collapse of Christendom.

So, during the second year of the Sixth Form—the first year's work is more simple and objective<sup>1</sup>—one begins by posing the questions: 'What is the malady of our time? Why have all the fine hopes of a world of peace and plenty come to nothing? In what way is it true to say that we are at the end of an epoch in history?'

If one accepts as a tentative hypothesis the thesis that, in developing one side of his nature, man has neglected another side, equally, perhaps more, important; that, in concentrating his energies on the conquest of the material world, he has lost touch with spiritual reality; that, in order to recover from its sickness, the world must rediscover something it has lost, a truer doctrine of God, the universe and the nature of men, one is impelled to try to find out how this came about. Only thus can one arrive at a position in which one can make a valid diagnosis and discover a remedy.

This historical survey may take somewhat the following form. One may begin with an examination of the conception, held by the Christian thinkers of the Middle Ages, of man as a creature, of his essential nature desiring goodness, yet, through original sin, wounded in that nature, and so never his true self, dependent on God and in need of divine grace, a being with a destiny in both time and eternity. From this one may go on to study how this conception was gradually undermined and changed from the time of the Renaissance and Reformation onwards; how the expanded sense of man's power resulted in a humanism which becomes more and more anthropocentric, making man more and more his own centre, capable through his own unaided reason of creating an earthly paradise, less and less dependent on any power outside himself. Intertwined with this eleva-

<sup>1</sup> We have found it convenient to divide it up among three masters, one dealing primarily with philosophical (including the philosophy of politics), the second with scientific, the third with religious material. It is deliberately designed as a prelude to the second-year course, described in this essay.

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tion of human nature to the status of godhead, another train of thought may be noted, that held by some of the Protestant Reformers, whereby the nature of the world and of men is conceived of as utterly corrupt in its essence. This conception is at the root of the division of the religious and secular into separate compartments, which is found in a good deal of modern history. In the eighteenth century its antithesis is seen to emerge in the growing belief in the essential goodness of man, which inspired that millennial optimism, which was typical of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century thinking. Men being fundamentally good, all that was necessary, in order to bring about a state of universal harmony and prosperity, it was believed, was to discover the right machinery and to create the right environment.

This is the barest outline; much else emerges as the study proceeds.<sup>1</sup> For instance, it is of significance for our purpose to notice how that movement in human thought, which started by elevating man to the stature of a god, eventually annihilated him, turning him into a bundle of conditioned reflexes or a mere unit in the collective or an insignificant result of a process of natural selection.

One may notice, too, how, having discarded all belief in a supernatural God and having limited human destiny to the material world, men have, in our own age, striven, through a revolutionary movement of radical atheism, to create a wholly new humanity, endowed with daemonic qualities wholly alien to those praised by every great religious teacher of the past. The results of that movement are plain to see.

Out of all this the question naturally arises: Did then the older faith, with its warnings against the sin of pride, its doctrine of original sin and the need of divine grace, its insistence on man's creatureliness and dependence on God, contain something essentially true after all?

In examining the validity of the Christian faith for our own time, any sort of hazy, sentimental religiosity must be avoided.

<sup>1</sup> A much fuller treatment will be found in 'Towards a Philosophy', included in this collection of studies.

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Let us study frankly the picture of the Founder of Christianity found in the Gospels and see what He had to say.

Something very significant emerges as one studies the teaching of Jesus, a profound objectivity, a deep insight not only into the human heart but also into the nature of the historical process, an astringent quality, stern and clear cut. Perpetually Jesus seems to be saying: 'The choice is yours to make. Do this and this will be the result, inevitably, absolutely, always'. The Sermon on the Mount emerges as the most acute and exact piece of human and sociological analysis in the whole of the world's literature, universally applicable. 'Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God', applies equally to the artist and the saint. 'Blessed are ye when men shall persecute you', is as true of Pasteur as of Saint Paul. The whole of St. Matthew, vi, 19-34, 'Do not lay up treasure for yourselves on earth—A man cannot be the slave of two masters at once—You must serve God or money; you cannot serve both.—Do not fret over your life, how to support it with food and drink.—Make it your first care to find the Kingdom of God, and his approval, and all these things shall be yours without the asking.' (Mon. Ronald Knox's translation) is a devastating criticism of a mass-production civilization, which depends for its existence on creating a greater and greater obsession with physical needs to keep its factories working and its men and women employed.

Important as is the ethical and sociological teaching of Jesus in relation to the dilemma of our age, one cannot rest there. That other side of the teaching of Jesus, contained in the Parables of the Kingdom, and in the doctrine of the Word made flesh, enunciated and expounded by the author of the Fourth Gospel, must be considered. The Christian assertion that Jesus was the incarnate Son of God, the revelation of the Perfect in history, cannot be shirked.

Perhaps the chief difficulty which must be faced is that boys of to-day are the heirs of that mode of thinking and apprehension which began with the Renaissance. They cannot escape the influence of the widespread assumptions of their particular epoch; the outlook of many of them, even though they may be

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nominally Christian, is coloured by an underlying materialism. They find it difficult to believe that anything may be incontrovertibly true which cannot be proved by the methods applicable to the examination of the phenomena of the material world, that the things which are not seen may be as real as the things that are seen, that values may be other than relative.<sup>1</sup> One must aim at establishing a conviction that the existence of spiritual reality is at any rate a reasonable hypothesis and that the evidence for it is as relevant as the evidence of the time-space world.

One may thus with advantage include in this course some simple study of philosophy in general.<sup>2</sup> This study may begin by posing the question: 'What is philosophy? What does it try to do?' It may then go on to a brief survey of the branches of philosophy, to an examination of how we apprehend the familiar world (to what extent can we say it is 'real'), to the various theories of knowledge (how do we know and how far is our knowledge valid?), to the nature of values (how far can we postulate an order of reality other than that of the psychologist? Are values absolute or relative?), to aesthetics and the philosophy of politics. There need be nothing dry-as-dust about such a study; much of it will be clearly realized by boys as of intense relevancy to the burning issues of to-day.

If, at this stage, one is able to do a little work of a more precise and detailed nature, it will be an advantage. Not much may be possible, but, perhaps, one may have time to take one philosopher, say Plato, for closer study. His age was very

<sup>1</sup> A preliminary list of axioms, unconsciously held by many to-day, has been compiled by Prof. Emil Brunner. They include:

- (i) Everything is relative; there is no absolute truth.
- (ii) What cannot be proved is uncertain; probably unreal.
- (iii) Scientific knowledge is certain and is the standard of truth; matters of faith are uncertain.
- (iv) The visible and tangible is the standard of reality; the less visible, the less real.
- (v) The big things are the great things; because man is so small in relation to this big universe he is also little.

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<sup>2</sup> Or this may be included in the first year course.

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similar to our own and its problems very like those of our day. Some sort of historical introduction and an outline of the main features of his philosophy will be necessary; after which selections from his writings may be read and discussed. Sir Richard Livingstone's *Selections from Plato* (World's Classics) provides material in convenient form.

This, however, is not enough. If boys, soaked in an essentially materialistic view of reality, are to be helped to find a religious faith which will satisfy their adult minds, they must not only know the arguments for the existence of spiritual reality, they must be introduced to the technique of spiritual apprehension. While due honour and respect must be given to scientific method as a valid means of working within its own field, boys must be shown that there are other methods of exploration, equally valid in their own sphere. This involves something which is possibly an unusual type of study in schools, an introduction to mystical theology and an examination of the methods used by the contemplative in his search for union with God. Such a study is not an easy one; the ground is unfamiliar; many boys will not even have heard the word, *contemplative*, or have the slightest idea who the great contemplative saints were or what they wrote. It is, however, a fascinating and valuable study, if carefully carried out. Some caution is needed, for the way trod by these cragsmen of the spiritual life is not one which many can or ought to travel, except in its lower ranges. Yet I know no better way of impressing the validity of the hypothesis that there is something beyond the world which our senses apprehend. In the presence of the great contemplatives one feels oneself in the presence of experts speaking with authority and, allowing for differences of environment, with a common voice. It is desirable that boys should have some small familiarity with the writings of a few of these adventurers of the spirit, Saint Augustine, Saint Teresa, Saint John of the Cross, John Ruysbroeck and that very remarkable fifteenth-century bishop, Nicholas of Cusa, one of the best mathematicians of his time, who, in his *Vision of God*, seems to be anticipating Einstein. One may also with advantage read a little from the Cambridge

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Platonists (with their doctrine of the spirit of man as the 'candle of the Lord') and from the mystical writings of William Law.

It may be objected by some that this is indoctrination; and, to an extent, it is. The time is past, however, when the schoolmaster can remain neutral, coldly aloof in his ivory tower above the conflicts of the market-place. He is now in competition with every shallow charlatan, every glib politician with his easy nostrums, every agency which will not scruple to use all the means which modern propaganda offers to indoctrinate those it wishes to win. He is in deadly conflict with the Prince of this world, who would destroy the souls of men.

It is, however, a form of indoctrination which accepts definite limits as to what is allowable and what is not. Scrupulous regard must be paid to that freedom of the adolescent boy which the schoolmaster is compelled always to respect. Much of it takes the form of exposition and analysis. Where it is biased, the bias is obvious. The boy is free to accept or reject every thesis put forward, every implication drawn; and some of them do so.

At any rate, it is a sincere attempt to give the adolescent boy, about to go out into the world, some armour against forms of indoctrination more subtle and more unscrupulous, the impact of which he cannot escape, and to provide him with some material which may perhaps enable him, by the grace of God, eventually to arrive at a philosophy and a faith which will satisfy his adult mind.

## XVI

### TOWARDS A PHILOSOPHY<sup>1</sup>

**I**n one of his novels, *Babes in the Darkling Wood*, H. G. Wells makes one of his characters speak as follows:

‘At the back of all there surely has to be a creed, a fundamental statement, put in language which does not jar with every reality we know about the world. We don’t want to be put off with serpents and fig leaves and sacrificial lambs. We want a creed in modern English, Sir. And we can’t find it.’

The primary fact of our age is that it has lost itself. It is puzzled, disillusioned, afraid. The idealism which inspired our forefathers and which led them to hope that the freedom and emancipation of mankind was not far distant has ended in a gigantic enslavement; the glorification of human reason, which was to place man on an ever higher pedestal, has resulted in his annihilation; those discoveries in science and technicology, which were to abolish toil and want, have culminated in a world, hungry and destitute, crouching under the threat of the atomic bomb.

Something has clearly gone wrong; the unexpected has happened. It is desirable to ask why. In the attempt to answer that question much has already been said, many books have already been written. It would be arrogant to attempt to do more than diagnose some of the factors of this strange and terrible catastrophe, and, from that diagnosis to suggest possible lines of thought.

It is untrue to say that, as a man believes, so he will act; that is to neglect the factor of will. It is true to say, however, that a

<sup>1</sup> A paper read to the Doughty Society at Downing College, Cambridge, on 22nd February 1946.



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man's actions are ultimately based on his creed, on his *speculum mundi*, his doctrine of God, the world, and his own nature. The essential thing for the salvation, not only of our world, but also of ourselves, is to find a creed sufficiently strong to generate will, a satisfactory synthesis which, though in part beyond reason, accords with reason, and does not conflict with (to use Wells's words) 'every reality we know about the world'. It is of the essence of a workable creed that the mind is able to rest in it without undue intellectual tension—some tension there must always be—and that it provides a satisfactory picture of what one conceives to be real, so that one is spontaneously and inevitably flung back on it for the explanation of experience.

The first step is one of diagnosis. We must try to discover what has happened, so that we may have as accurate a picture as possible of our present dilemma.

It is unwise to romanticize the Middle Ages or to imagine that the medieval mind was not subject to tensions and contradictions as were the minds of other ages. Nevertheless medieval man, perhaps due to a happy absence of self-consciousness, was able to equate such worrying antitheses as free will and determinism, the individual and society, and evolve a satisfactory intellectual synthesis.

At the time of the Renaissance and Reformation this synthesis broke down. One might say that men discovered themselves, and, from that newly realized self-consciousness, looked out on a new world. There was a heightened sense of personal identity and separateness, a growth of that humanistic attitude summed up in the phrase: 'Nihil humanum non mihi interest', and, with it, an increased sense of power and of human potentiality.

The extent to which the synthesis had collapsed is clearly seen if one examines, for instance, the way Saint Augustine and thinkers who came after him were able to strike a balance between free-will and determinism and the virtual shirking of the issue in the theology of Luther or in the cruel logic of Calvin's solution. The changed outlook is further evident if one compares the spirit of Gothic and Baroque architecture or of

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the sculptures of Chartres Cathedral and of Michelangelo. A new *speculum mundi*, a new doctrine of God, of the world, of man, had been born; of it we are the heirs and the victims.

The results of this passing from a view of the world essentially dependent and theocentric, through various intermediate balances, to one entirely self-sufficient and anthropocentric have been traced by Jacques Maritain (*True Humanism*). He pictures it as resulting in a threefold tragedy, a tragedy of Man, of Culture and of God. Let us examine this threefold tragedy.

(1) At first Man, regarded as a being of infinite worth and carrying in himself the seeds of an immortal destiny, recognizes his dependence on God. But, in his pride, he flings aside this dependence and makes himself his own centre. All things are conceived as possible to him of his own power; he is Man, the master of things. But by his own discoveries he destroys this conception of himself. Biologists and psychologists reveal to him that he is nothing more than the ephemeral result of a process of natural selection or a mass of conditioned reflexes. He is thus annihilated by his own thought. He ceases to have any significance as a person. No escape is left to him but a descent into the impersonal ideal of collective man.

(2) The idea of a natural order, sustained by a divine power and amenable to a divine law, gives place to one of a purely human order, founded entirely by human reason. This order is still, at first, based on Christian values. There is, however, a gradual breaking away from the Christian origins of European culture. Supernatural religion comes to be regarded as superstition, to be overthrown as the enemy of the advance of mankind. Man is considered capable, of his own inherent goodness and power, of creating a material world of security and plenty. We were hardly out of that period of millennial optimism when a second World War broke upon us, shattering all our cloud castles and revealing the terrible thing that lay beneath, a revolutionary movement, which had discarded all previously accepted values and beliefs and set as its object the creation of a wholly new and godless humanity.

(3) God as a transcendent and immanent reality is reduced

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first to a mere idea, then disappears; Nietzsche is compelled to proclaim that He is dead.

It will be useful to expand and comment on certain aspects of this sequence.

It is difficult to escape the conclusion that the Catholic doctrine of the nature of man has an inspired balance and accords more with reality than that which, from the Renaissance onward, more and more replaced it. The Catholic conception may be summed up somewhat as follows:

Building on the Aristotelian dictum that man was an animal endowed with reason, it maintained that man was also a person, that is, 'a unity of a spiritual nature, endowed with freedom of choice, and so forming a whole which is independent of the world'. He is, however, never simply his natural self, for he carries the burden of original sin, so that his being is out of joint. He is not corrupted in the essence of his being; indeed, he is endowed with a natural instinct towards the good; but he is wounded in his nature, and consequently the good he would do he is unable to do. He is in need of the operation of divine grace to enable him to attain his true potentiality. He is at the same time a natural and a supernatural being, moving in two elements, with a destiny which is both in time and in eternity.

On our conception of the nature and potentiality of the individual depends our conception of the nature and potentiality of society, which, unless one is prepared to give it a mystical entity of its own, is only the sum total of the people who compose it. The Catholic conception of the nature of man, while it denied the possibility of an earthly millennium, implied that society was redeemable, and that the religious and secular spheres were linked together under the divine providence. The Reformation conception of man, as utterly corrupt in his essential nature and only capable of salvation when completely changed through grace, on the other hand, led to a separation between the spiritual and the practical life, between religion, on the one hand, and politics and economics on the other, which was disastrous. For it meant that the world was, since corrupt in its essence, incapable of redemption. Religion had nothing

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to do with politics; business was business. Man could, through faith, save his own soul, the world could not be saved. Religion was a private affair for each individual soul; it could not be a dynamic for the redemption of society; for society was irredeemable.

In the following centuries a violent swing over from the Reformation doctrine of the utter corruption of man to that of his inherent goodness, typified, for instance, by Rousseau, took place. The millennial optimism, which sprang from this belief, has permeated much of the thinking of our time. It is, however, difficult now, to believe that men are naturally good—we have seen too much of the effects of what may, not inaptly, be termed 'original sin'—or that everyone will be automatically good if given the right environment.

It was a strange paradox of the thought of the Renaissance-Reformation era, that from one point of view it envisaged man as utterly helpless, from the other as a creature of majestic power. This sense of the majesty of man, of his vast potentiality, typical of much Renaissance secular thinking, was the stronger force.

'What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason! How infinite in faculty! In form and moving how express and admirable! In action how like an angel! In apprehension how like a god!'

It led to a shift of interest, a shift of sensibility, at first restrained and modified by the older doctrine of the dependence of man on God, in what may be called the phase of theocentric humanism, but, as the feeling of power in the material sphere increased, turning more and more to a belief in the supremacy and sufficiency of the human reason. The sense of dependence of man on something outside himself, of awareness of a spiritual reality beyond that of the material world, declined until, as an effective motive, it was almost entirely lost. Man turned to himself as his sole centre and source of being. The phase of theocentric passed into that of anthropocentric humanism.

This transition was immensely strengthened by, was indeed, to a great extent due to, the development of science, which enlarged men's knowledge of the world of physical phenomena, and, later, by advances in technology, whereby, through this

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scientific knowledge, men were able to harness and control the forces of nature for practical ends.

The results were important. The vast achievement in a particular field, and the sense of power and self-sufficiency engendered by that achievement, gave rise to an over-weaning pride in the ability of man, through his unaided reason, to mould the world to his will. He no longer felt any need to postulate the existence of a God, for he himself had assumed the functions of God. That was not all. The success in the sphere of material phenomena, through a particular technique of thinking and apprehension, gave rise to the conviction that that particular technique of thinking and apprehension was the only possible and valid one. Nothing that was not susceptible to scientific proof could be regarded as true. A whole field of awareness was lost; so that man's development became more and more lopsided, more and more lacking in balance and moderation. The sense of the numinous became increasingly dim; the pressure of the outward increasingly pronounced.

The final stage was reached through the agency of that human reason of which man had been so proud and which he had raised to the throne once occupied by God. With the discoveries in the domain of biology, which linked man's ancestry with that of the apes; with the discoveries of the illimitable extent of space and time, which seemed to make man's history an insignificant episode in a vast, impersonal sequence; with the discoveries of psychologists, whereby man's character and actions were shown to be determined in the obscurity of the womb or to be the uncontrollable outcome of conditioned reflexes, the bubble of his pride was pricked. He became a mere automaton in a world which had lost its meaning and purpose. Having annihilated God, he was himself annihilated. The significance of Nietzsche lies in the fact that he tried to face up to the necessity of resolving the tragic dilemma created by the death of God. To counter the resultant despair, he created the superman. He did not live to see the superman become a puppet, responding automatically to the ringing of the bells of his environment.

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And so we find ourselves living in an era, longing for security and peace, for firm ground on which to place its feet, yet borne down by the frustration of its hopes and despairing of its future. It is significant that H. G. Wells ends his long series of analyses and anticipations with a book, to which he gave the title, *Mind at the End of its Tether*, in which he prophesied the end of the human race on this planet.

It is an unconvincing prophecy. Nevertheless, that mind, born in the optimistic exuberance of the Renaissance, has, indeed, reached the end of its tether; something more than that mind is needed to find a way to raise mankind from his Slough of Despond, from a world in which the conviction of the existence of any power outside it is so nebulous as to be ineffective, in which all values have become relative, the mere product of historic circumstance, and so unable to provide a firm directive to conduct, in which so many, crushed by the complicated mechanisms of a world which has become incomprehensible and hostile, turn to irrational ideologies, which discard all previously held beliefs, and violent solutions, which create more problems than they solve.

We come back to the quotation with which this paper opened: 'There has to be a creed, a fundamental statement in language which does not jar with every reality we know about the world.' There can, however, be no putting back of the clock of history. Though one may believe that, for the world's salvation, something which may be called 'Christendom' must be reborn, that must not be taken to mean that one thinks that the medieval Christian synthesis can be restored or that that progression of thought and action, which started at the Renaissance and is now at its tragic close, was not a necessary and inevitable part of human history. There must, however, be something in the nature of a return, a picking up of discarded threads, a re-discovery of a wisdom which has been lost. It would seem to be the destiny of man that he can only go forward by forgetting, that to make any new advance he must discard what he had once known; he is not yet sufficiently developed to retain the old while he pushes forward to the new. There

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comes a stage, however, when there must be a retrogression, when the old must be taken up again and combined with the new to form something different from that which existed before.

That is the task, to reach a fresh synthesis. And that synthesis, though concerned with the eternal things, must be in harmony with the intellectual concepts of our era and be couched in language which is not alien to our thought. Wisdom, though it may be forgotten, can never grow old or out of date, language can and does become stale, and the symbols which, for one age, adequately expressed reality, may, for another, conceal rather than reveal it.

It is probable that this new synthesis, which will be the basis of a new dynamic, is already, slowly and obscurely, taking shape. Whether it will be something which can be described as 'a re-birth of Christendom' cannot be affirmed. The temper of our era is at present anti-Christian and its dynamic pagan. Whether such a re-birth of Christendom, if it happens, will take place within or through the agency of the official Christian Church is again uncertain. It may be that the inertia of an ancient institution will be too strong for the many ardent spirits within it, that the re-birth will be brought about by a revolutionary movement taking place, to some extent, at any rate, outside the official Church.

This, however, may be said: A philosophy which will meet men's needs must have a universal validity and application, it must embrace the wholeness of experience, it must gather into one things earthly and heavenly. Further, in our present era, it must contain within itself a social dynamic; it must be concerned with a heaven in time as well as a heaven out of time.

The philosophy of anthropocentric humanism, concerning itself solely with a heaven in time, splendid though many of its achievements have been, has reached an impasse. Though the statement of John MacMurray, that the social intention of Christianity is more fully expressed in Communism than in that *bourgeois* capitalism, which grew up under the shadow of Christianity, may contain a good deal of truth, the material and philosophical limitations of Communism prevent it from being

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more than the temporary revolutionary antithesis to the existing order.

A fertile line of advance may lie in a Christian sociology, founded on the teaching of Jesus and on a doctrine of the nature of man nearer to that of the Catholic conception than to that of Rousseau. Such a sociology would base itself on a regard for human personality, which is lacking in Marxist collectivism, on eternal values which would counter that luciferic Faustianism which has led to so great disaster, and on a doctrine of the two-fold nature of man and his destiny, through the loss of which he, as a person, has been annihilated by his own reason. Quite apart from anything one may believe about the nature of Jesus, one cannot but be impressed by the exquisite sociological insight revealed in his recorded sayings. Regarded not primarily as imperatives, but as pieces of acute social analysis, they take on a greater and greater significance. At first startling and apparently paradoxical, almost unbelievable, further examination reveals their essential truth and relevancy to the world as it actually is. They form not only a healthy corrective to the falsity of much of current social thinking but also contain the basis of a new social dynamic.

It would be foolish, however, to try to build a social dynamic on a philosophy which could not be sincerely held except in a state of impossible intellectual and emotional tension. A Christian sociology can only be based on a philosophy which is itself Christian. What may be called Incarnational sociology can only be founded on Incarnational theology.

It is of the essence of Christian belief that there has been an Incarnation, an eruption of the Divine into history of an immense and permanent significance, which it is impossible to neglect or discard. Such a belief is alien to the thought of the self-sufficient heirs of several centuries of materialistic thinking. It involves a change of mental climate, a different assessment of probability, a new outlook on the nature of things. The failure of anthropocentric humanism and the materialistic interpretation of life in our time, and that failure is surely evident, may perhaps have brought about a temper of mind which allows of



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a more sympathetic approach. One may now be prepared to agree with Plato that action not founded on eternal values, that is on something outside time and space, can lead only to disaster or to accept the profound statement of Nicholas Berdyaev: 'The dogmas in which the absolutes of the spiritual life have their adequate symbolic expression cannot be modified or changed. The Trinitarian character of the being of God, the dual nature of the God-Man Christ, are mystical and eternal facts; Christ is the only begotten Son of God from all eternity.'

It has sometimes been asserted that the intention and meaning of the life and teaching of Jesus was twisted and changed by later writers, particularly by Saint Paul and the writer of the Fourth Gospel. Saint Paul, and perhaps even more, the writer of the Fourth Gospel, however, carried out an essential task of interpretation. It was necessary that the significance of Jesus should be stated in cosmic terms and that his life and teaching should be given a universal validity. The analysis of that significance, with which the Gospel of Saint John opens, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . . . And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us; and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten son of the Father', contains not only the kernel of the Christian assertion, but also the starting point and foundation for a philosophy which can meet the modern need. For, postulating, as it does, the necessity, for any creative act, of both a Creative Idea, and also, in order that the work of creation may go forward, of a Creative Energy or Activity, the Word or Logos, present from the beginning, it asserts that this Creative Activity was incarnate in time in Jesus Christ, who thus becomes the necessary manifestation of the unknowable God, and whose nature can only adequately be described in terms of 'True Man and True God'.

In this symbolism is found the possibility of a reconciliation between the apparently conflicting approaches to reality of science and religion. The eternal Logos is pictured as present from the beginning in every creative act, whether carried out through the operation of natural forces or through the agency

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of man. All knowledge that man can have of anything material or spiritual, every poem or symphony composed, every discovery made, happen through the agency of this Cosmic Energy; everything known or discovered may be termed a revelation. The philosopher, striving to know how he knows, the scientist, delving into the secrets of material phenomena, the contemplative saint, stretching out with the dart of longing love to reach God, are all equally engaged in a religious activity, the attempt to find truth; only the planes on which they work and the material with which they deal are different. From each is demanded the same virtue, that purity of heart, that singleness of purpose, which, if present, Jesus affirmed, will enable one to see God. Indeed, to claim that the scientist is, in his methods, more truly religious than most theologians contains a strong element of truth. For, provided there is humility, the following after truth, wherever it may lead, the willingness to lay aside preconceived opinions, the intellectual honesty which refuses to assert more than the evidence warrants, are God-like virtues, which the theologian sometimes lacks.

Do these symbols jar with all the realities we know, or think we know, about the world? It is essential that our picture of reality should be expressed in symbols which do not conflict with reason. Reason, however, can only partially approach and apprehend the reality of things; another faculty, the faculty of 'faith', which is not credulity or a shirking of thought, must also be brought into play.

Though ultimate truth can only be fully known through faith, one cannot be called upon to accept as true that which the mind rejects as unreasonable. While 'credo ut intelligam' is a valid way of approaching truth, 'credo quia impossibile est', is a cry of despair. It is important that, since reason has apparently failed, one should not allow oneself to be overwhelmed by a surge of irrationality; it is equally important to realize that centuries of preoccupation with modes of thinking which have achieved so fertile results in one particular sphere have attuned our minds to these particular modes and make it difficult for us to envisage, or regard as valid, other modes. It is probable, however,

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that our salvation depends on our capacity to envisage, and recognize as valid, other means of apprehending reality and on our bringing into play faculties which have become atrophied through lack of cultivation. The unknown writer of perhaps the deepest and loveliest work of medieval mystical literature, *The Cloud of Unknowing*, uses the phrase: 'By love may He be gotten and holden; by thought never', and it is significant that a writer such as Koestler, brought up under the influence of Marxist philosophy, should, in one of his latest books, *The Yogi and the Commissar*, urge the necessity of cultivating the faculty of contemplation.

To what is this leading? First of all that the existence of planes of reality outside, though possibly closely linked up with, those of the material world, should be recognized as, at least a tenable, hypothesis. There is far greater evidence to support such an hypothesis than is generally realized. Secondly, a deliberate setting out to discover the techniques through which these planes of reality may be explored. The techniques are unlikely to be the same as those used by the explorer in the field of physical phenomena, since the material is different. They can, however, be equally 'objective', equally inspired by the pure search for truth.

There is a significant passage in a book by the fifteenth-century writer, Nicholas of Cusa, one of the best mathematicians of his age, in which he speaks of the necessity, for the attainment of knowledge, of what he calls by the strange name of *docta ignorantia*.

'I behold Thee as infinity. By reason of this Thou mayest not be attained or comprehended or named or multiplied or beheld. He that approacheth Thee must needs ascend above every limit and end and finite thing . . . and thus, in regard to the intellect, unto ignorance and obscurity, which pertain to intellectual confusion. It behoveth, then, the intellect to become ignorant and to abide in darkness if it would fain see Thee. But what, O my God, is this intellectual ignorance? Is it not an instructed ignorance? Thou, God, who art infinity, canst only be approached by him whose intellect is in ignorance.'

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Strange words, but the meaning is clear. Reason, working through the intellect, is the instrument of the first stage of apprehension. It is able to frame a metaphysic; it can, however, do no more; it cannot explore further. To make the next step there must be a deliberate act of 'unknowing', a putting off of the sort of thinking which has led thus far, an entry into a state of 'instructed ignorance', so that new faculties of apprehension may be released.<sup>1</sup> Let it not be thought that what is asked for is credulity or irrationality. The demand is for the bringing into play of modes of valid apprehension, which alone are capable of functioning in the field which is to be explored. The result is an enlarged knowledge and increased awareness and insight, the release of unexpected and unappreciated powers, able to supplement those already there.<sup>2</sup>

Saurat, in *A History of Religion*, writes as follows: 'It is im-

<sup>1</sup> This necessity of 'unknowing', of 'instructed ignorance', is expressed, in various forms, in the writings of many of the great contemplatives; for instance:

'There is a still more perfect knowledge of God which is the result of a sublime ignorance'—DIONYSIUS THE AREOPAGITE. *The Divine Names*

'He must have lost himself in a Waylessness and in a Darkness . . . In the abyss of this darkness, in which the loving spirit has died to itself, there begins the manifestation of God and eternal life. For in this darkness there shines and is born an incomprehensible Light'—RUYSBROECK: *The Adornment of the Spiritual Marriage*.

'It is necessary for the perfect fruition of this communication of God, that all the senses and powers, both interior and exterior, should be disencumbered and emptied of their proper objects and operations, for the more active they are, the greater will be the hindrance which they will occasion.'—ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS. *The Spiritual Canticle*.

<sup>2</sup> We have been analysing and considering a process of organic development; an evolution of personality. We may treat this either as a movement of consciousness towards higher levels or as a re-making of consciousness consequent on the emergence and growth of a factor which is dormant in ordinary man but destined to be supreme in the full-grown mystic type. . . .

'Contemplation is the mystic's medium. It is an extreme form of that withdrawal of attention from the external world and total dedication of the mind which also, in various degrees and ways, conditions the creative activity of musician, painter and poet; releasing the faculty by which he can apprehend the Good and Beautiful, enter into communion with the Real.' Underhill. *Mysticism: a study in the nature and development of man's spiritual consciousness*. Part II, Chapter VI (Methuen).

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portant to note that this same Western European race (which produced Christian mysticism) was also to found experimental science. Mysticism is inner experience as science is external experience. The same desire for reality is at work in the two directions.'

What is suggested is both simple and obvious. If it is found that a certain road has led to a dead end, it is not unreasonable to assume that somewhere a wrong turning has been taken. The wise man will retrace his steps. That, though it partially conveys the meaning, is perhaps not a fully satisfactory way of putting it. For the achievements in the material sphere of the last four or five centuries are not something that one would wish to lay aside. There can be no quarrel with humanism in itself. A humanism, however, which has borne such bitter fruit is probably a false humanism, based on false premises. It is necessary to find a truer humanism, based on a truer philosophy of the nature and destiny of man.

